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[The Editor will be pleased to consider manuscripts if accompanied by stamped and addressed envelopes. He accepts no responsibility, however, for manuscripts submitted to him.]

## Events of the Week.

WE suppose that the Cabinet understand the implications of their suppression of the Strickland report, after its consideration by them. The public is now entitled to believe that the burning of Cork was the deliberate act of servants of the Crown. Not content with this felon blow against the third city in Ireland the Government, by withholding the report, continues to inflict a deadly injury on its victim. The reconstruction of Cork depends upon an early publication, for it must determine the attitude of the insurance companies and the validity of the claim for Government compensation. To shield Sir Hamar Greenwood, to obviate intestine disputes between rival militarists in Ireland, and to save the Government from the infamy with which its servants mark it, the economic life of Cork must remain in ruins and its families be deprived of the livelihood which the ordinary resumption of business ensures. Meanwhile, Cork is to be further punished according to General Strickland's latest proclamation, by a more rigorous exercise of martial law, since he is not satisfied with the merely passive attitude of the majority of its citizens towards attacks upon the Crown forces. Instead of receiving compensation for their burned houses the impoverished merchants may live on the suggestions of a new civilian inquiry—precisely the form of inquiry which the Chief Secretary has already derided as incompetent.

THAT the Cabinet is divided on the moral of these horrible events we can hardly doubt. It is probable that the Prime Minister, disappointed of the promised victory for Greenwoodism, was prepared for a serious advance to Father O'Flanagan, and we believe that, in the early stage of this episode, he made a really valuable and ingenious suggestion. But the Tories seem to have vetoed any step on the road to peace, and it was not taken. Then came the Strickland report. The truth about Cork is notorious, and if General Strickland is a man of honor, it is not possible to think that he has concealed it. But Dublin Castle took alarm. "What, give away the Black-and-Tans! Then the cause of law and order is lost."

The Black-and-Tan party in the Cabinet, rallying to these stalwarts of the Castle, is said to have broken the Prime Minister, or at all events held him up, and brought the Irish policy of the Government to a complete standstill. But the scandal of the withheld report is now world-wide. Nothing can permanently screen it from the light; while every hour of delay adds to the confusion of the culprits.

"CONSIDER" (writes an Irish correspondent) "this incomplete list of violent incidents in Dublin alone during last week. It omits the nightly raids and arrests, and their accompanying circumstances of theft and violence, and the familiar robberies from shops by men in uniform:—

"Wednesday.—Volunteer attack at Bachelor's Walk upon a motor lorry conveying Auxiliaries. No serious casualties.

"Thursday.—Miss Nowlan killed and six others wounded, one critically, by a discharge from a military lorry in Westmoreland Street. An official account in the 'Daily News,' but not in the Irish papers, states that this remarkable result was achieved by one shot.

"Friday.—William Magrath, K.C., a well-known and very popular Nationalist, murdered.

"Saturday.—Miss Byrne wounded in Lord Edward Street by a discharge from an armored car passing by.

"Miss Collins wounded at Dun Laoghaire (Kings-town) by a shot from a lorry holding auxiliary police.

"Sunday and Monday Morning.—A section of Dublin, including the Four Courts, isolated by the military engaged in a house to house search."

Meanwhile Sir Hamar Greenwood is indefatigably optimistic, bawling his goods in the Sunday papers like a flash auctioneer on a temporary pitch.

THE mind of the Prime Minister has evidently been exercised upon the problem how best to employ (or to temper) the energies of Mr. Churchill. Probably it admits of no solution, though, for our part, we should like to see the results of making him Chancellor of the Exchequer, with a mission to fight waste instead of making it. In the act, however, of congratulating oneself that Mr. Churchill is to leave the War Office, one shudders at the consequences of his appointment to the Colonies. Mr. Chamberlain was the first big man who ever cared to take this office, and the South African War followed in due course. The attraction of the Colonial Office to Mr. Churchill is not, we imagine, the task of conducting diplomacy with the Dominion Premiers, who will stand no nonsense from him, or supervising the civil service in the Crown Colonies. The lure is that the new Middle-Eastern Department is to be placed under him. He will rule unchecked from Egypt to Afghanistan. He will have under him in Mesopotamia every conceivable facility for expenditure and adventure, and in Persia the fullest scope for quarrelling with the Bolsheviks. A more dangerous sphere for a megalomaniac could hardly be invented. We may at once say farewell to the hopes of the Milner settlement in Egypt, or of a military withdrawal from Persia.

THE Persian situation is, at the moment, both interesting and mysterious. Rumor announced the other day that the young Shah had abdicated, and fled from Teheran. He may have been on the point of doing so; he may even have fled and returned. The present position seems to be that he is still on the spot, and active in holding conclaves with the aristocrats and great landlords. On the other side stands the Ministry, with the Sipahdar at its head, which seems to have the people behind it. The Shah and his grantees lean on English support, and desire to ratify Lord Curzon's Anglo-Persian Convention, which practically makes of Persia a second Egypt. The Sipahdar, on the other hand, leans upon Soviet Russia, and has just concluded, or is just about to conclude, a Convention of very close amity with her. Russia is popular, partly because she stands for the people's cause against the grantees, partly because she allows the fullest scope to Persian nationality, and partly because she is a makeweight to Lord Curzon's somewhat stifling patronage.

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THE Persian Parliament (Mejliss) meanwhile, has been elected and is gathering in Teheran. It is sure to reject the Anglo-Persian Convention, and in that case our officers, instructors, and advisers, according to Lord Curzon's promise, will be withdrawn. But, what if it also ratifies the Russo-Persian Convention? Even if the Russians see the wisdom of moderation, and do not try to hasten the adoption of Communism in Persia, it looks as though a conflict were inevitable between the Court and grantees, whom we back, on the one hand, and the popular party on the other. The old positions are reversed. The present Shah's father used to be the Tsarist *protégé*, while we, on the whole, used to play for popular sympathy. A corrupter thing to back than the Persian aristocracy could hardly be discovered. Russia, be it noted, does help her allies, which is more than can always be said for us. She is supporting the Soviet Government of Armenia in an ultimatum against the Turks, and demands from them, not merely the evacuation of the territory they occupied (which in fact is taking place), but also compensation for the damage done in the invasion.

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THE French Cabinet crisis has ended with the formation by M. Briand of his seventh Ministry. M. Millerand, whose avowed plan is to be an authoritative President, with tendencies towards the American model, at first intended to name a weak successor to the somewhat ineffectual M. Leygues. M. Péret, the new President (Speaker) of the Chamber, failed, however, to bring all the talents together, because M. Poincaré and M. Briand both claimed the portfolio of the Foreign Office. Apparently it was felt that M. Péret was not strong enough to stand without both these props. With M. Briand as Premier and Foreign Minister, there may be a prospect that the Chamber will have a skilful master. But on the other hand M. Millerand, to attain that end, has had to drop the plan of governing through a non-entity. The Chamber never liked that idea, and is not likely to surrender power, even in foreign affairs, to a President whom it could not control. M. Briand's is a very composite Cabinet, with MM. Barthou (War) and Doumergue (Finance) as its leading members. From this grouping one can guess little as to policy. The tendency will be apparently to moderation in European affairs (which may bring about an attack from the Poincaré school). But M. Briand has always been an Easterner, and here he may find himself in sharp conflict with Mr. Lloyd George.

A WELL-INFORMED correspondent writes:—"The Allied Conference, which opens in Paris on Monday, is a further evidence of the Supreme Council's tenacious hold on life. There is, however, some hope that the event may bring its decease appreciably nearer. The question it was primarily called to discuss—German disarmament—is likely to cause little trouble. As far as the surrender of material goes, Germany has discharged her obligations punctually, and in regard to the one point at issue, the disarmament and disbandment of the *Einwohnerwehr*, the Allies appear to have recognized the danger of forcing a conflict between Berlin and the provinces. At the same time a mild ultimatum, with a reasonable time limit, would probably be welcomed by the Central Government as strengthening its hands, and everything suggests that as the probable solution. The real crux of the Paris discussions will be reparations. Not that anything like a settlement is to be looked for yet, for the Brussels Conference between Allied and German experts is still in mid-career, though it has not met in formal session since Christmas.

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"HOWEVER, much more progress was made at Brussels than had been looked for, the French representatives, MM. Seydoux and Cheysson, showing themselves more reasonable than previous French negotiators. The present position is that enough advance has been made at Brussels to point the way to a particular type of settlement. This is agreement by Germany to pay a lump sum by instalments—principally in the form of coal and other commodities—conditionally on the Allies agreeing to the retention of Upper Silesia, to relaxations of the Treaty's provisions in regard to shipping, and to certain other concessions without which German industry cannot be re-established. The trouble still is that even in their more moderate mood, the French are likely to ask for far more than Germany can possibly pay. It is now said that she is to pay £150,000,000 for five years. Such a demand will simply drive her into bankruptcy. It is forgotten that Germany is only paying about a third of her general charges out of taxation."

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It is, we suppose, agreed that international co-operation to provide emergency credits to countries destitute of purchasing power, and to make a fair distribution of raw materials, is the most urgent need of the hour. Yet our Government, in conjunction with the Dominions, have wrecked the proposals at Geneva to entrust these duties to an Economic and Financial Committee of the League of Nations. When the war ended it was intended that the economic and financial functions exercised by the Supreme Council should pass to the League. The Brussels Conference certainly demanded the early establishment of such a body. But, when Italy and some of the smaller nations brought up their proposals at Geneva, they met their stoutest opposition from the representatives of this country and the Dominions. The latter objected to any international interference with the disposal and the prices of raw materials in the interest of European nations. Our representatives vetoed any fresh Financial Conference before the spring of 1922, as well as the establishment of a permanent Economic and Financial Committee of the League. The Government should be made to state their reasons for thus crabbing the League of Nations.

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MR. KELLAWAY, of the Overseas Department of the Board of Trade, says that he looks to the future with "restrained optimism," but he admits that the lowest

point in depression and unemployment has not been reached. He could hardly do otherwise in face of the evidence. During the week ending January 8th there was an increase of 111,000 in the registered unemployed. How far this was due to special circumstances following the holidays will be made clear when the next figures are available, but it is reported definitely from some of the most important industrial centres that the ranks of the wholly unemployed have been swollen to a serious extent since January 8th, while the amount of work available in many of the short time industries has grown less. A Swansea report, for instance, states that 8,000 men in that town have not more than two days work per week. The coal output for the week ending January 8th, 4,344,500 tons, shows a decrease of 200,000 tons as compared with the same week in 1920, and a decrease of nearly 900,000 tons on the recent and improved figures. This is due to collieries closing down owing to lack of orders. At this rate the 3s. 6d. increase in wages will be gone when the next adjustment is made.

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MEANTIME, debate begins to centre on the demand for a general lowering of wages. The fall of five points in the cost of living will bring about small decreases automatically in the public services, on the railways (if the fall continues until April), in the woollen textile trade, and in one or two minor industries, and some groups of workers, like the Furness iron ore miners, have accepted reductions to lessen the risk of unemployment. But any attempt to carry through the sweeping cuts which have been possible in America will lead to serious trouble. Already the workers are raising a counter-cry for the reduction of high profits. The "Herald" replies to Mr. Roscoe Brunner's letter in the "Times" by pointing to his firm's twelve-years' record of exceptionally high profits, and to the recent distribution of bonus shares out of accumulated profits. Employers must expect much more of this criticism if they go on talking about wages alone.

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On the other hand it cannot be questioned that, in many trades, labor is not giving a reasonable output. Here, we fear, the question is largely one of spirit, and the inflammatory method, on one side or the other, is merely evil. The single question for the community is whether greater production is for the public benefit or merely for private profit. Consider the sinister and absolutely unjustifiable attack on the building guilds, for instance. A long time ago the building operatives, with one or two enlightened employers, offered a scheme which would have converted the building trade into a great public service, limiting but guaranteeing profits, fixing continuous wages, and guaranteeing immunity from the effects of bad weather unemployment. The bulk of the employers rejected it, whereupon the guilds were started. Actual experience shows that they are building houses at anything from £100 to £150 below contractors' prices, and that many of the men are laying eight hundred bricks a day. Council surveyors are unanimous in praising the quality of the work. Now the Ministry of Health, yielding to the pressure of the interests, announces that no more guild contracts will be signed on terms which make the guaranteed weekly wage possible. How can Labor be kept steady and moderate when effort at peaceful evolutionary progress is thwarted in this way?

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It is now known that Mr. Harding, so soon as he takes up office in March, will invite all the Powers to a

Conference on disarmament. Not only will he ignore the League of Nations in so doing, but he will also propose his substitute for it—a legal Tribunal for arbitration. He is paving the way for both projects by the issue of a somewhat fervent letter advocating Anglo-American friendship, and what seems to be a joint leadership of the world. The plan is, in essence, conservative, if not reactionary. It could content only satisfied Powers, which have got all they want in the world. It would leave us with no organ available for bringing about changes, or revising treaties, or altering an intolerable *status quo*. A legal Court can do none of these things. It can only interpret and impose the Treaties which regulate existing settlements. To disarm, in these conditions, would be to accept the *status quo* for all time. Weak as the League is, it has, at least on paper, the right to initiate changes. Mr. Harding's letter may, however, serve one good end, if it completes the disillusion of the French war party, which looked to America for support against Great Britain.

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As everyone expected, the Conference of the Italian Socialist Party is leading to a split, but the fissure does not seem to be following the prophesied line of cleavage. The Italians entered the Third International before the famous twenty-one points of Communist discipline were laid down. Its very able Right Wing (which, in any other country, would be reckoned a fairly advanced Left), including Turati, Treves, and Modigliani, was tolerated and respected, but Moscow now demands its expulsion for the sin of "reformism." This the Centre, now under Serrati, was resisting, and Serrati himself has written a somewhat acid, but well-merited, open letter to Lenin. Everyone expected that the true-red Communist Left, with the vital, picturesque Bombacci at its head, would fail to carry the party and would have to secede. At the last moment the Centre has rallied to the Left, and that in spite of some very outspoken declarations in favor of an early armed revolution, by the extremer leaders. The sequel is not yet known as we write, but it looks as though the Right will have to secede alone. Our own impression of Italy is that revolutionary tactics in the Russian sense have little chance, mainly because the Italian moderates have evolved tactics of their own (they have, indeed, a spice of revolution in them), which are winning rapidly for the peasants and more slowly for the workmen what they really want.

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THE Australians have won the "rubber" match of the series; and the ashes of our humiliation return here till (maybe) we win them back this summer. Our defeat seems to us a matter of merit, somewhat accentuated by bad luck and climate. The English captain could not win a toss, and though the last match was well fought to the end, it is impossible to look for a score of over 400 runs in a fourth innings. The defects of the team revealed themselves as the fight went on. They were a little too old—even the most brilliant of them—and you cannot expect from ageing players the kind of fielding (or bowling) good enough to beat a first-rate Australian eleven on its own ground. Nor do we quite understand Mr. Douglas's management of his bowling, or his exclusion of such a wonderful all-round player as Hitch in favor of Parkin, who is not an all-round player at all, and whose fielding is of a different order of play from that of Hitch. Douglas is doubtless a good county captain; but we should have favored recourse to Rhodes. Why should not a "player" lead the cricketers of England? We are sure that Australia would have welcomed him.



## Politics and Affairs.

### THE NEW MOOD IN FRANCE.

FOR two years past French politics have shown a steadiness, a relentless persistence of aim and thought, which led most of us to conclude that this attitude must be counted, for many years at least, as a fixed and unchanging factor in the life of Europe. That assuredly was no small matter. France may be in many ways exhausted and impoverished; one may doubt whether, even after she has acquired her vast new resources of iron and coal, she has the makings of a great industrial Power; the state of her finances (she has this year borrowed twelve hundred million sterling to balance her Budget) must bridle her will, and, like every other white race except the Poles, her manhood has had its fill of fighting. None the less, she enjoys a military ascendancy in Europe far more absolute than any Power has attained since Napoleon fell; she is still, in spite of the bad exchange, by far the wealthiest Power in a bankrupt Continent, and her diplomacy has the rare merit of knowing its own mind and acting with decision. So long as the informal Alliance of the Victors lasts, nothing whatever can be done without her assent. Even if one hoped that a change might come a few years hence, with the next Chamber, the fact remained that these are, for Europe, the formative years. So far, it has seemed that nothing could change, save for the worse. Faint shades of opinion divided the two governing men, MM. Clemenceau and Millerand, from each other. But to most Englishmen they seemed negligible. All the vocal criticism came from politicians who were, or professed to be, even harsher than they towards the vanquished, if possible, more relentless towards Russia, and still more ambitious in the East. Even an ex-Socialist like M. Briand used to attack from this chauvinistic standpoint. M. Poincaré stood, and stands, for a view of international relationships as crude and pitiless as ever came out of Prussia. Behind them the lesser men, like M. Barthou, imitated their tone, and varied the savagery towards the Germans only by an occasional paroxysm of Anglophobia.

The other view rarely found a voice outside the Socialist Party, and it has gone from one disaster to another, from failure at the polls to the fiasco of the general strike, and from that to the ruptures and schisms imposed by Moscow. Where was moderation to begin? Whence could it come? It looked as though this nation, aware of its financial peril, restless because the fruits of victory so closely resembled bankruptcy, was bent on using force, threats, and intrigue to extort an impossible tribute from the vanquished, entirely careless of the consequences, though these might range from the break-up of the alliance, and the spread of Bolshevism, to the hopeless decline of European civilization itself. It seemed to learn nothing from experience. It was still haunted by the dream of seizing the Ruhr coal-field. It blamed the Poles for making peace with Russia. It even talked of equipping Baron Wrangel for another venture in the spring.

We incline to think none the less that a change has been going on for many weeks or months, at all events in the private minds of the abler men. This world of opportunist politicians is not remarkable (what political world is?) for moral courage. Orators accustomed to draw cheers from crowds by chauvinistic speeches keep up the habit, and after their own views have changed, they hope to dodge a public opinion which they dare not confront. French Ministers are much franker in the lobbies and committees of the Chamber than they are in

the tribune, and some sayings were attributed to M. Leygues of a nature to alarm the Poincaré school. He asked for a free hand at the coming Allies' Conference, and challenged the Chamber by refusing the discussion of all interpellations on the subject. Probably no single reason explains the big vote by which the Chamber drove him out of office. It is the only Parliament in the world that really governs, and it never accords *carte blanche* readily in times of peace. It may have questioned the capacity of M. Leygues to cope with Mr. Lloyd George. Part of the vote was due to the fear of M. Poincaré's school of thought that M. Leygues was going to be relatively moderate. In spite of this proof that the more violent section of opinion is still very much alive, the crisis has ended in the choice of a successor who is said to be a secret advocate of the same moderate views. M. Briand (though nothing in his public speeches has prepared us for the news) is now described, both in the French Press and by well-informed English correspondents, as a moderate. Obviously, if the course is to be shifted several points, a skilful navigator is required. The Chamber will have to be managed, and he has the mesmeric eloquence for the feat. The French have their *endormeur*, as we have our "wizard," and both of them are Celts. It will be a difficult task. Confronted with his own past, M. Briand may relapse, or he may find himself the victim of one of those curious mass movements of the Chamber which upset M. Leygues.

Whatever be the immediate fortunes of the new tendency, the main fact, and an encouraging fact, is that it exists at last. M. Millerand himself seems to be behind it, and it has the support of the "Matin" and the "Temps." Their files, in retrospect, become extremely interesting. The transition is very quietly made, and, but for the crisis in the Chamber, one might hardly have noticed it. The "Temps," however, ventured last week upon a leading article about Russia which makes one rub one's eyes. The whole apparatus of attack, whether by Poles or White Guards, is quietly dropped—not openly discarded, but simply ignored. The British trade policy is discussed with an undercurrent of approval. The article concludes by advocating that everyone should combine to restore the productivity of Russia, and it is even proposed that the Germans should take a prominent share in the work. The reservations, to be sure, are important. The whole new policy is to be regulated by the Allies in common; Germany is to work under their direction; the debts of Tsardom are kept well in the foreground of the argument. If Lenin chose to regard the new move as a more subtle form of penetration and conquest than the old frontal attacks, we should not be surprised. None the less, the transition from the old idea of smashing Russia, to the new idea of helping Russia to work, is remarkable enough, and we feel sure that the "Temps" would have used its heaviest bludgeon only a very few months ago upon anyone who had dared to propose the co-operation of German industry in the restoration of Russia.

The same sobriety appears in two very similar articles on the indemnity question, which appeared, the one in the "Temps" on the eve of the crisis, and the other in the "Matin" after it. Two sharp alternatives are set out. One method by which France might obtain her rights is, we are told, an unbending insistence on the full letter of the Treaty. This involves the use of force towards Germany, and it also means that France would have to separate herself from her Allies. If they stood aside, the Treaty itself would lapse, and France in isolation would then proceed to impose a new settlement on the vanquished, conformable to her interests alone. This is evidently a sketch of the Poincaré policy,



and it means, presumably, that France would break up the German *Reich*, and rely for the satisfaction of her own financial claims on an occupation or quasi-annexation of the Rhine provinces and the Ruhr, with the separation of Prussia from South Germany as a detail in the scheme.

This policy is rejected in both articles. The other course is said to be to maintain a close accord with the Allies, with the consequence that France must accept for the indemnity a figure which Great Britain considers acceptable. The choice lies, we are told, between getting the money or making an isolated demonstration in the world. We take this to mean that the more realistic minds in France have come to the conclusion that it would be wiser to accept a comparatively moderate total for the indemnity, provided that they can get it with Allied or international guarantees. They hope, on the security of annual payments by Germany, that an Allied or international loan can be floated, which will at once bring to the shaken finances of France the support which they need. They prefer, in fact, a moderate sum "down," to the very speculative prospect of extorting single-handed some immeasurable booty from the Germans by the constant application of force. This school of thought draws the inevitable conclusion that if the labor of Germany for a generation to come is to be made the basis of an immediately realizable credit, the conditions of work, even to the extent of encouraging her participation in the restoration of Russia, must be conceived and prepared with a certain largeness of mind. In other words, the Millerand school perceives at last that France has an interest in promoting the survival and solvency of her debtor.

One must welcome this change of mind, if it prove to be a genuine and a permanent change, with the utmost cordiality. Since the movement of rational calculation has begun, it can only be our task to promote it with tact and generosity. We use the latter word because we fear that, even in this more realistic mood, the expectations of the French may be still too high. We do not believe, as they seem to do, that any considerable improvement has yet set in in the economic condition of Germany. The unemployment is terrific; the rise in prices goes on; the reduced scale of living which both manual and intellectual workers have had to accept, has sapped their mental and physical energies; the supply of coal is inadequate for any big industrial effort; the printing of money continues, and it is hard to see how the burden of taxation can be much increased; and, finally, there is no new spring of hope which might bring with it the will to perform miracles. An indemnity can be paid only by a great surplus of exports over imports. As yet the trade figures show a heavy monthly deficit. Any reckoning on any indemnity whatever must, in these conditions, be purely speculative. Given the huge deficit in the Budget, and the big adverse balance of trade, an indemnity fixed at 2,000 millions looks scarcely more reasonable than the old French figure of 13,000 millions. Even a five-year tribute of £150,000,000 sterling in gold is far beyond Germany's present power of recuperation. The Budget must be balanced, the trade balance reversed, the mark restored, and the physical efficiency of the workers nursed back to health by big imports of cheap food before any indemnity can be spoken of at all.

In general terms the French, or some of their abler men, begin to see the problem. But do they, or do our own officials, even now realize, quantitatively, the magnitude of the problem? The difficulty about raising an international loan on the security of annual payments stretching over years is, of course,

that financiers, weighing all the risks of insolvency, revolution, and war, may not take a rosy view of the prospect that Germany, say, twenty years hence, will be punctually grinding out the tribute. The security, to our own thinking, would be worth very little unless the indemnity were fixed at a figure which the Germans themselves considered equitable and realizable, and even then such moderation would be useless unless the prospect of fruitful work before the German race were such as to bring a new stimulus to its shattered will and starved nerves. For our part, because we realize how hard it is for France to come down from her inflated hopes to a sane measurement of the problem, we would concede much to ease the task of MM. Millerand and Briand. We would gladly make concessions to their view of the Middle Eastern question, rather saner as it is, to our thinking, than that of Lord Curzon. We would be willing to drop our own big share in the indemnity, not merely because this would permit the reduction of the total, but also because it rests mainly on that claim to the payment of pensions and allowances, which a piece of sharp practice added to the Armistice terms. France has hitherto been exacting. But it cannot be said that we have made it easy for her to be moderate.

#### THE FOREIGN POLICY OF AMERICA.

SIR AUCKLAND GEDDES has suddenly announced a visit to this country, and Lord Chalmers has postponed his financial mission to Washington. The events are obviously connected. As men think of them their minds run over the many issues which threaten the friendly relations between this country and the United States. Some are of small intrinsic importance, and under ordinary circumstances easily susceptible of settlement. Such are the Panama Tolls and Oceanic Cables questions. We may even include the provisions for the repayment of our debts to the American Government. These are essentially business propositions, evoking no powerful feeling, though capable of making awkward contributions to any more inflammatory matter which might arise. Of a quite different calibre are the questions involving either racial passion or the issue of Americanism. Upon that last issue the recent Presidential election was fought, and it has put in power the strongest conservative Administration of the last two generations. It is not easy to appraise the evil effect of the methods of barbarism which Mr. George's Government employs in Ireland upon public sentiment in America. It is by no means to be measured by the numerical importance of the American-Irish population and their highly organized influence, considerable as these factors are. In ordinary times this is largely offset by a certain strain of anti-Irish feeling among large sections of the Anglo-Saxon elements of the population. This was certainly the case a year ago, when Mr. De Valera's speeches aroused much criticism in a people still friendly, on the whole, to their war-associate. But now the atmosphere has changed. A great and rising volume of indignation and astonishment marks in the average American public their loathing of the atrocities in Ireland. We must remember that to Americans what is going on in Ireland is an attempt to throw off an alien yoke by a subject nation entitled to their independence by every accepted principle of democracy. With this war of independence all good Americans, save a handful of cultivated Eastern Anglophiles, profoundly sympathize. This does not mean that the Republican Administration is likely to raise the issue of the recognition of an Irish Republic, or to take a *formally* hostile

attitude on Ireland. But let us not deceive ourselves. *Our misconduct in Ireland is rapidly, and maybe fatally, poisoning the mind of America.* And the American reaction to it will make it difficult for us to get a good and amicable settlement on any one of the other matters of controversy that arise.

The other great race-issue takes shape in the urgent matter of naval construction. Unless we can get on good terms with America, we are almost immediately thrust into the impossible position of competing in fleet-building with a country possessed of more than twice our population and four times our material resources, and to whom we are debtors to the tune of nearly a thousand million pounds. Now, there are in America, as elsewhere, business interests and groups of political megalomaniacs that want a big navy as an instrument of power. But the overwhelming public opinion of the nation is opposed to a great naval or military policy. America has always resented, in some degree, the dominance of the British Navy. But she has not thought of it as dangerously detrimental to her interests. For American interests in foreign countries have hitherto been of entirely secondary consequence, even for purposes of trade. The new dangers and the new bonds of interests disclosed by the Great War have compelled America, for the first time, to recognize that the old political isolation and security have gone. Now, whatever be her immediate attitude to formal internationalism, she takes her stand as one of a number of great world-Powers, bound, as such, to watch the policy of others and conform her policy to theirs.

Now, while America is uneasy in her relations with Europe, she is much more actively concerned with the aggressive Imperialism of Japan. And the Japanese claim to be treated as a political and social equal by the white races of the world arouses feelings of intense bitterness. The maintenance of our alliance with Japan is more certain than any other fact to worsen our relations with America. Nor does that by any means exhaust the measure of its danger. Persisted in, it would go far towards breaking the solidarity of our Empire. For every one of our self-governing Dominions is hostile to an alliance which, seeming to mitigate, does actually aggravate the feeling against the yellow races. If anything is to come of the negotiations for disarmament which have received the support of the Congress and of the President-Elect, and upon which American opinion is almost solid, both England and Japan must be prepared to abate their Imperialism.

For, setting aside the aggression of Japan in China and elsewhere, it is idle to conceal the fact that "business" America resents our own territorial and commercial policy. The inflammable word "oil" has already been uttered over the Mesopotamian mandate. It has been easy to persuade Americans that the war, which they are proud of helping us to win, while it has brought them few thanks and no emoluments, has placed Great Britain in control of vast new territories whose resources she will monopolize for her own purposes. The tropical products of Africa are regarded as an almost exclusive property of this country and France. Now France is avowedly bent upon converting her mandates into close national preserves, and as recruiting grounds for her black Pretorians. And Great Britain is threatening to throw over the free commercial practice by which hitherto she has bought off the enmity of other Powers. Already she has forged the first links in a chain of Imperial trade selfishness. It is, perhaps, well for us that America has lost no time in challenging this aspect of our policy in Asia. For her challenge may lead us to an understanding of the very vital and obvious truth

that no sentiments of war-alliance or other past attachments will prevent nations excluded from access to essential foods and raw materials from uniting against an Empire monopolizing the produce of a fertile quarter of the globe. We have been so conscious of our innocence, and, indeed, our commercial policy has hitherto been so harmless, that we fail to realize the imminent peril of the reversal of that policy. America has, therefore, done us a service in asserting her intention, quite irrespective of the League Covenant or other explicit agreements, of claiming equal access to the resources of the mandated areas.

But no separate consideration of the relations between America and Great Britain can reach any really valuable conclusion. For these relations are too intimately linked up with the political and economic attitude which America will assume towards Europe in general. Her recent attitude has been one of disillusionment, tempered by a positive resentment at the demands for pecuniary help put out by the needy European peoples. At first sight it appears as if the electoral verdict recorded against Mr. Wilson and his League were conclusive against any real movement to internationalism in the United States. This, indeed, was the electoral atmosphere. But there are already signs of a different temper. Among the most respected Republican leaders there are many avowed and enthusiastic advocates of the League, and though it is impossible that America would sign this Covenant without important reservations, it is also certain that many European friends of the League would welcome them. The removal of Article X., binding the League to the Bad Peace, the improvement of the position of the Assembly and of the constitution of the Council, the amendment of the difficult amending clause, and other substantial improvements in the League, if pressed by America as the conditions of her adhesion, would receive strong support from the body of smaller nations, and quite probably from this country and Italy. Indeed, the participation of America is so evidently essential to the success, or even the survival, of the League, that almost any changes needed to make the Covenant conformable to the American policy and constitution would, in all likelihood, be accepted. The new Government, we are now told, is prepared to enter an Association of Nations, to take part in an International Tribunal for settling disputes, to promote disarmament, and, presumably, to share in the responsibilities and commercial advantages of helping to govern backward countries. But these are the chief purposes of the present League, and if the dangers of its present structure can be removed, it is an inept policy to scrap the Covenant in order to build up a new Association.

America can, of course, stand out of European affairs—at a price. But the price would be a heavy one. It would be expressed in terms of armed preparedness, damaged trade, large financial losses in the shape of loans, and the poison of decaying and revolutionary States in Europe, unable to recover from the Great War and the Mean Peace because America, the only strong and wealthy Power, refused to lend a helping hand. Our conviction is that America will speedily recover from the fit of disillusionment and disgust with Europe, so soon as sanity begins to show itself in the conduct of European affairs. Europe needs, most of all things, the financial aid which America alone can give. For only thus can the raw materials, foods, and manufactured goods, for lack of which whole populations of the Continent, ex-enemy and ally alike, are unemployed and starving, be supplied soon enough and in sufficient quantities to stop the slide of civilization to

anarchy. The enlightened self-interest of America, as well as her humanitarian idealism, is enlisted in this great work of salvage. It is the maddest aspect of our conduct towards Ireland, and of France towards the economic recovery of Central Europe, that these misdeeds make it so hard for enlightened Americans, eager to see their country grasp the greatest opportunity for help ever offered to any people in human history, to make their light prevail in the darker recesses of their country's policy.

### GEORGIAN STRATEGY.

Gossip used to tell, during the war, that M. Clemenceau's nickname for our Prime Minister was "*le Stratégiste*." We have had from Mr. Lloyd George's admirers a picture of him in that rôle, displaying him as the inspired leader with single eye, the broad outlook, the clear vision, endowed with an almost uncanny gift of prophecy, struggling against the narrow minds and dull brains of the professional soldiers. Cabinet papers from his pen have been allowed to stray from the ministerial despatch box, papers predicting woe unless his advice were followed. His advice rejected, the woe came. The legend that he is the man who won the war has been maintained with rare skill. At last we are given a picture of the strategist from another angle, and much that has been dark has been revealed. Colonel Repington's book gives us an exposition of an underworld of intrigue and deception, of irresponsible trifling with the lives of men, of struggle for power, and of the misuse of power when gained. We learn that the methods of the jumping frog, to which we have grown accustomed since D.O.R.A. ceased to screen our governors, were the methods applied to the conduct of the war, as indeed we might have guessed, and we are left wondering how we won through.

We find our strategist, whether he be Chancellor of the Exchequer, Minister of Munitions, Secretary of State for War, or Prime Minister, making and discarding plans of campaign as light-heartedly as he makes and discards pledges to the electorate. As Chancellor he desires to transfer the whole of the British Army from France to the Danube, as Minister of Munitions he is all for Salonika, as Secretary for War he is eager to bring in Roumania. Then he hedges, and predicts Roumania's downfall. As Prime Minister, in January, 1917, he desires to reinforce Italy and overwhelm Austria; in February he is an enthusiastic supporter of Nivelle and of a great break through on the Western Front. In August he is once more for the Italian front, and in January, 1918, he believes that our only hope lies in knocking out Turkey. At the end he has as many cards up his sleeve as the Heathen Chinee, and is prepared to drop a trump on any trick that is played.

The story of the dropping of one of these trumps is a very pretty example of political legerdemain. *Apropos de bottes* a memorandum by Mr. Lloyd George, dated early in September, 1916, found its way into the correspondence between himself and Mr. Asquith which preceded the *coup d'état*. It predicted the downfall of Roumania, and appealed to Mr. Asquith to urge the General Staff to take adequate measures to avert such a calamity, failing which the blood of another small nation would be on our heads. This memorandum has been freely quoted by our Prime Minister's admirers

as a classic example of his prescience and vision. We now learn that Mr. Asquith sent Mr. Lloyd George, then Secretary of State for War, over to Paris to conclude the agreement which brought Roumania into the war in the middle of August, and Mr. Lloyd George signed the agreement (it has been published in France) some three weeks before the famous memorandum was written. He backed both horses. If Roumania won there was his signature, if Falkenhayn won there was the memorandum. As the latter trick was played the appropriate trump was shown to a few trusty friends, the other card remaining up the sleeve.

But it is Mr. Lloyd George's conduct of the war as Prime Minister which is chiefly impugned. He came into power as the man of push-and-go to replace an inert and exhausted predecessor. For the first six months of his rule our armies in France grew steadily in strength under the arrangements made by Mr. Asquith, and during that period the new Prime Minister, busily occupied with his adventures in strategy, did nothing to provide for the maintenance of our military power. In the summer of 1917 his military advisers became anxious, and from then on he was engaged in a constant wrangle with them on the subject of man power. He disliked both Robertson and Haig, but did not feel himself strong enough to get rid of them, and we are now presented with the amazing spectacle of the head of the Government resorting to a policy of pin-pricks in relation to his two chief military agents for the conduct of the war. In the autumn of 1917 Haig is driven to say that attacks by the British Prime Minister upon the Commander-in-Chief of the British Armies in France are highly unpatriotic, and that if the Prime Minister did not like the Commander-in-Chief's leading he should remove him.

Then after these months of unseemly controversy comes the Versailles conference of January, 1918, held to decide upon the plans for meeting the German attack with which we were menaced, because of the collapse of Russia. Clemenceau and Foch at once attack Lloyd George on the subject of man-power. Haig's infantry is 114,000 below strength, and he has been compelled with dwindling resources to increase his commitments by taking over more front from the French. As the Germans are steadily reinforcing their armies in the West, the obvious course seems to be to make good Haig's deficiencies. Our Prime Minister waves his critics aside, declares that this is a domestic matter in which the Versailles conference has no voice, and hints at a social revolution if the country is asked for more men. He propounds an alternative plan, and proposes that 1918 should be devoted to knocking out the Turk. The fact is that Mr. Lloyd George's famous Paris speech, delivered after the Italian disaster at Caporetto, was no mere outburst of emotion. He sincerely believed the barrier in the West to be impenetrable, he could not endure the horrible slaughter of the battlefields of France, and he set his military judgment against that of his military advisers. Thinking any reinforcement to Haig unnecessary, he refused to provide more men; holding that our lines in France were safe, he dreamed of a brilliant campaign in the Holy Land, to which both his own Chief of Staff and Clemenceau strongly objected. This, in itself, is serious enough, but worse followed. Ludendorff penetrated the barrier in the West, and came near to winning the war. The men who had been refused were found in a hurry, the troops who had been kept in Palestine were hurried to France. Then the Prime Minister rose in his place in the House, and, after these



months of controversy on the question of man-power, announced that the Army in France was "considerably stronger" than it had been in the previous year, and that the number of British troops in Egypt and Palestine was trifling. Inference—"I have done all that man could do to win the war, the blame rests with the stupid soldiers who are fighting with their backs to the wall." When General Maurice publicly challenged these statements, Mr. Lloyd George carried the House of Commons off its feet with one of his amazing pyrotechnical displays and won a majority of 187. The wrong cards were carefully locked away, the right cards found their way from sleeve to hand. Inquiry into the worst reverse ever suffered by the British Army in its long history was promised, and skilfully postponed until the tide of war

had turned, and attention was drawn from the disastrous events of the spring of 1918. Haig's despatches were withheld and amended, and then, before awkward questions could be asked, while the memory of victory was still fresh, the khaki election was planned and carried through. So one of the most amazing blunders in the history of war was forgotten; preparations to meet an attack long foreseen had been begun after the event, and the price we had to pay for that blunder was 300,000 casualties and millions of pounds' worth of war material. Yet by sheer political skill the arch-blunderer was able to finish in the limelight as the man who won the war. Truly he was more right than he knew when he said of himself "I may know nothing of military strategy, but I do know something of political strategy."

## THE PROBLEM OF THE FREE ZONES.

THE question that, above all others, preoccupies the people of Geneva at this moment is that of the "free zones." It is the subject of a controversy between France and Switzerland which is likely, if it continues, to cause bad blood on both sides. The question is a very small one in comparison with the vast problems bequeathed to Europe by the war—and the peace. But it is of great importance to Geneva, and not without importance to Europe.

Probably most people have a very vague idea of what the free zones are, or of the reasons that make them important to Geneva. That was my case until I came to Geneva and found everybody talking about the question of the zones, when I proceeded to inform myself about it. The zones are certain portions of French territory situated in the Departments of Ain and Haute-Savoie, and adjoining the Canton of Geneva, into which all Swiss products are at present imported free of duty. In these zones the French custom houses, instead of being on the political frontier between France and Switzerland, are moved back to the boundaries between the zones themselves and the rest of France, so that the zones are economically attached to Switzerland. In the simple map that accompanies this article the thick line represents the political frontier, the thin line the economic frontier; the territory between them forms the zones.

It will be seen that there are three "free zones": (1) the zone of 1815 consisting of the Pays de Gex (nearly identical with the Arrondissement of Gex) in Ain; (2) the "little Sardinian zone" of 1816 in Haute-Savoie; (3) the "annexation zone" of 1860 in the same Department. The last, which is much the largest, is not in the same category as the other two, which were secured to Switzerland by an international agreement, and to which Switzerland has treaty rights more than a century old. The Swiss representative at the Congresses of Paris and Vienna in 1815, Pictet de Rochemont, fought hard to obtain for Switzerland her natural frontier—the Jura mountains—by the annexation to the Canton of Geneva of the Pays de Gex. He failed, but France was obliged by the Treaty of Vienna to make the Pays de Gex a "free zone." It should be said that this was merely a revival of a concession voluntarily made by Louis XVI. in 1775. In 1798 Geneva lost its independence and remained part of France until 1814. When the independence of the Republic of Geneva was

restored, and it was federated for the first time with the rest of Switzerland, it was only natural that the privilege of the free zone in the Pays de Gex should also be restored, especially as Geneva had been forcibly deprived of that territory by Henry IV. of France, in spite of his solemn undertaking to respect it.

The "little Sardinian zone" also came into existence as a result of the Congress of Vienna, but it was formally created by the Treaty of Turin in 1816. It was then part of the kingdom of Sardinia, and passed to France in 1860 with the rest of Upper Savoy. It was at the latter date that the "annexation zone" was voluntarily created by Napoleon III. as a concession to the wishes of its inhabitants. The cession of Upper Savoy by Sardinia to France was approved almost unanimously by a *plébiscite* of the inhabitants, but the inhabitants of the provinces of Chablais and Faucigny, and of part of the district of Saint-Julien would have preferred annexation to Switzerland, and their consent to annexation to France was obtained only by Napoleon's concession. They voted *oui et zone*. Switzerland has, therefore, no standing in regard to this zone, and the matter is one between the inhabitants of the district and the French Government.

A glance at the map will show why the zones were created, and why the Genevese attach so much importance to them. The geographical situation of the Canton of Geneva is such that they are almost necessary to its existence. Before its annexation to France in 1798 the Republic of Geneva consisted of three separate scraps of territory isolated from one another and from the rest of Switzerland by foreign territory. In 1815 France and Sardinia made very small territorial concessions to join these three islands, if one may call them so, together, and connect the Canton of Geneva with that of Vaud. But even now the "Republic and Canton of Geneva" is wedged in at the end of the lake, with French territory all round it except in one corner where a narrow strip of land, nowhere more than two and a half miles wide, connects it with Vaud. With that exception its only connection with the rest of Switzerland is by means of the lake. The Department of Haute-Savoie, which borders one side of the lake, projects into Switzerland, cutting Geneva off from Valais. All the territory that now forms the three zones is, naturally, part of Switzerland, and its inhabitants are of the same race as the Swiss. It is too late now to repair the mistakes made in 1815 and 1860, but at least

they should not be aggravated by depriving Geneva of the advantage of the free zones.

For the Canton of Geneva is extremely small; it is for that reason that its situation will be so difficult if the free zones are suppressed. It is the smallest of the Swiss Cantons, except Schaffhausen and Zug, and its area is only 96 square miles, not quite two-thirds of the area of Rutland. This tiny Canton, with a total population of 170,000, contains the third largest town of Switzerland, with a population of about 135,000, and it is incapable of supporting it. The town of Geneva depends to a great extent for its supplies on sources outside the Canton, and during the war its revictualling has been one of the most difficult economic

one another. If one goes, let us say, from Geneva to Ferney—a tram ride of twenty minutes—there is nothing to show that one has passed from one country into another except the appearance at the frontier of an official representative of national sovereignty.

So close are the relations between Geneva and the zones that 700 inhabitants of the latter own agricultural land in the Canton of Geneva amounting in all to 1,750 acres, and about 4,075 acres in the zones are owned by 534 inhabitants of Geneva. These people, of course, have to cross the frontier daily to go to their work, and it is essential to them to have free communication for their produce. The French Government has seriously injured them by various prohibitions of exports, the



problems of Switzerland. For instance, the Canton of Geneva produces no butter or cheese, and little more than one-third of the milk that it consumes. So small is the Canton that, although the town of Geneva is in a corner on the lake, it is only about ten miles from the furthest point of the French frontier, and two miles from the nearest. The absurdity of the artificial barriers that have been erected between peoples is nowhere more apparent than in Geneva, where one has to carry a passport if one takes a tram two or three miles out of the town or goes for a walk up the Grand Salève. And the people that live on the two sides of the frontier belong to the same Savoyard race, speak the same language, intermarry, and live in close and constant contact with

application of which to the free zones is of doubtful legality. The other day an unfortunate Genevese was arrested when bringing wood from his own land in the zone of 1860 into Geneva, and marched by two gendarmes to Thonon. It appeared that the French Government had just issued a new decree about wood, about which nobody in Geneva knew anything.

The French Government is now trying to make Switzerland agree to the entire suppression of the free zones, on the strength of Article 435 of the Treaty of Versailles—one of the minor injustices of that Treaty. The desire of Switzerland to join the League of Nations, and, at the same time, retain her neutrality, gave an opening for blackmailing her in regard to the zones,

which M. Clemenceau took, with the acquiescence of Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Wilson. Article 435 is as follows:—

"The High Contracting Parties also agree that the stipulations of the Treaties of 1815 and of other supplementary Acts concerning the free zones of Upper Savoy and the Gex district are no longer consistent with present conditions, and that it is for France and Switzerland to come to an agreement together with a view of settling between themselves the status of these territories under such conditions as shall be considered suitable by both countries."

Switzerland was not, of course, a signatory of the Treaty, but the Swiss Federal Council accepted Article 435 with important reservations. The two zones of Haute-Savoie have up to now been neutralized politically. The French Government was bound not to keep troops in them in time of war. This obligation, inherited by France from Sardinia, Switzerland has agreed to cancel, and the concession is a large one, in view of the geographical situation of the territory in question. Switzerland also abandons the zone of 1860, which is much the largest, having an area of about 1,200 square miles (seven-tenths of the Department of Haute-Savoie), and a population of about 160,000. But in its communication of May 5th, 1919, annexed to the Treaty of Versailles, the Swiss Federal Council explicitly refused to agree to the suppression of the economic privileges of Switzerland in the two other zones. The French Government insists on their suppression, and the negotiations have reached a deadlock. Since the other signatories of the Treaty of Versailles have washed their hands of the matter, Switzerland cannot appeal to them. It is, however, doubtful whether Article 435 of the Treaty of Versailles deprives Switzerland of her international guarantee for the freedom of the zones of 1815 and 1816, for Russia, Austria, Spain, Portugal, and Sweden were parties to that guarantee as signatories of the Treaties of 1815, and they have not been consulted about the matter. Great Britain, France, and Germany have no right to abrogate any provision of the Treaties of 1815 without the consent of the other signatories.

One argument used in France in support of the suppression of the free zones is the fact that their products have not free entry into Switzerland. But, although, in my opinion, Switzerland should never have levied duties on imports from the zones, she was within her rights in so doing, and many products of the zones have for some years been admitted into Switzerland duty free, or with reduced duties. Moreover, Switzerland, in the course of the present negotiations, has offered complete reciprocity, so that there is no longer any excuse for raising this question. France has refused the offer of complete Free Trade between the zones and Switzerland.

The attitude of the French Government is difficult to understand, for the matter is of trivial importance to France. The area of the whole territory in question is only about 216 square miles, that of the Pays de Gex being about 156 square miles, and that of the zone of 1816 about sixty. The present system is to the advantage of the inhabitants of the zones in many ways. One result of it is that the French State, having to compete with Swiss products, is obliged to sell its tobacco and matches much more cheaply in the zones than in the rest of France, where it has a monopoly. The inhabitants of the zones are also exempt from several indirect taxes levied in the rest of France. Moreover, Geneva is their natural market. Nor does France suffer from the present system.

Before the war the imports into the zones from France were more than double those from Switzerland, whereas the exports from the zones into France and Switzerland were about equal.

The Genevese are profoundly hurt by the attitude of France, which they cannot help feeling to be a little ungrateful in view of all that Geneva did for French prisoners during the war, and of the intense attachment of the Genevese people to the French cause. There is some fear in Geneva that, since agreement has been found impossible, France will force matters to a head by simply moving the French custom houses to the political frontier. Should that happen, it would mean a serious quarrel between France and Switzerland, and the Swiss Federal Council would, no doubt, appeal to all the signatories of the Treaties of 1815. In the general interest of Europe such a crisis must be averted somehow.

ROBERT DELL.

Geneva.

## A London Diary.

LONDON, FRIDAY.

THERE must be a new camouflage about Ireland every week. Last week Mr. Lloyd George had almost settled with Father O'Flanagan. Now he is declared to be panting for the assembly of Dáil Eireann. These stories are the merest smoke screen. So far from promoting peace in Ireland, the Prime Minister has prevented it. He even prevents the functioning of his own Bill; for nothing will induce Ireland to touch it under martial law, and the denial of fiscal freedom, which was repeated a fortnight ago in Downing Street, sets the seal on her refusal. Shall Dáil Eireann be summoned? Mr. George must know that this can never happen so long as he insists on his list of proscribed members. Probably he has done none of these things by his will, but at the bidding of his Tory allies in the Cabinet and in Ulster. But the really tragic delusion which the history of the last fortnight has reawakened is that the Black-and-Tans have mastered Ireland. It would be nearer the truth to say that they have re-created her. Any Englishman of intelligence and fairly open sympathies who has come in contact with her sons and daughters will say so. There is the core of violence. There is also a calm, heroic mood, born of unspeakable outrage, and kindled by it into lofty and unshaken endurance. The news from day to day attests the increasing activity of the Republican organization; and anyone in touch with Ireland knows that as the result of the invasion of the irregulars, Irish society of almost all grades and types of stations and opinions has swung to the Left. What the common people feel I may illustrate by this tale of a young woman of Tralee, whose house had been burned over her head, and who had lost her all in it. Going out naked into the world and holding her two children by the hand, her first words were: "Tell the boys never to give in." Mr. George is not going to break that kind of spirit.

BUT, indeed, the state of Ireland is unrealizable. Imagine this scene, related to me by a man who bears a name famous in the political history of Ireland. A



party of soldiers, with a commander, enters a house at night. The householder is in bed. The house is searched and a copy found of the organ of the Volunteers—not, in itself, one would say, a conclusive evidence of anything but sympathy with, or curiosity about, their doings. The officer drags him out of bed, and pushes him out of doors, and a few minutes later returns, with the story that his prisoner had “tried to escape” [formula], that he had fired, and that the man had got away. A little later the body was found, shot twice, and lying within a few yards of the door. The District Inspector reported the act, and the party were locked up for ten days. An “inquiry” was then held, and nothing more was heard of the matter. Now the names, place, witnesses, and circumstances of this deed are all ascertainable; and so is the character of the “inquiry.” Why, then, is not it “inquired” into? By what warrant does murder thus stalk at will through Ireland, and, by a thousand acts of complicity, assure the Government’s acquittal of its crimes?

MR. CHURCHILL at the Colonies! Mr. Churchill running the “mandated territories” with a fine new plant of tanks and guns, soldiers and sahibs, missionaries and muddlers, of all the old types and some of the new! Mr. Churchill meddling with the Dominions, and being told, American-fashion, to mind his own business! Mr. Churchill spending our money and power like water, and presently getting out of it all and getting into something else; and Mr. George explaining why or explaining nothing at all! And the country slipping, slipping down into the morass of expenditure and the worse morass of no work! Who cares? Not Mr. Churchill, for he has got a new toy to play with. Not Mr. George, for he has kept Mr. Churchill quiet. Not the anti-wasters very much, for such eyes as men of the Rothermere type possess are on the pence that can be screwed from the schooling of British boys and girls, rather than on the Grand Sink of a ruinous foreign policy.

Is it not therefore time for men of genuine care and right-mindedness about policy to declare war without quarter on such a Government? I see that Lord Robert Cecil has taken a step, and a good one, in that direction. He announces at Hitchin that though he remains a Conservative he considers himself an “independent” one, and that in his progress from the dependent to the independent kind, he has found that love of liberty has grown on him. What is more to the point, he says in effect that he is prepared to cross the floor of the House. I call that business. Only unmuzzled men can talk to England as she must be talked to, if salvation is to come her way, and make her realize that she is both disgraced and imperilled. If they are silent, ruin will not be averted, but its heirs will be this Rothermere-Bottomley faction, in whose hands both the character of the country and the laws and principles of its greatness could only perish. But the country must not be so despaired of. It must be raised from the low ideals of the Georgians and the Bottomleyites (they are birds of the same feather) and saved from the petty divisions of the opposition parties.

I SAY that Lord Robert Cecil is the workman for the job. There is great interest in him, as I can testify from the letters I continually receive about him

from Liberals (especially from Nonconformists) who find in him a touch of the Gladstonian fire, follow his ideals, and approve the sober ardor of his pursuit of them. He has thus grown into national repute as an honest, upright, fine-natured man, with his eyes turned to the light. It is, I think, specially remembered of him that he was the first of our statesmen to realize the world’s sad plight and to preach the way of its deliverance. I believe that the Liberal leaders, once convinced that he was of their company, would gladly co-operate with him; that in foreign policy at least Labor would take his guidance and accept his authority; and that if a common forward policy (political and industrial policy) can be constructed, and he is prepared to put social welfare before property, he may be the man to frame it. But at least there is a call for him, and I think that in these days men should answer to such voices, whether they seem to be of God or only to come from their perplexed fellow-men.

I AM fairly well inured to the ways of public men and Ministries, but I confess to being a little startled by an example of them set forth, with adequate audacity, in the London letter of the “Manchester Guardian.” The paragraph in mind deals with Sir Gordon Hewart, the Attorney-General, his qualities as a lawyer, and his ambition to become Lord Chief Justice. It starts by saying that Sir Gordon would make the “best Lord Chief Justice.” I think of Lord Sterndale, and add the qualified assent that he would make quite a good one. But presently I am informed that Sir Gordon desiring the Lord Chief Justiceship, does not want it, and the Government do not want it for him—quite yet. On the contrary they “want” Sir Gordon Hewart’s political services a little longer. So they seem to have struck a deal with him. He is to have the Lord Chief Justiceship all right, but to enable them to use these political services of his for the term of their conscienceless life they propose to make an “interim appointment.” In other words they will choose an old judge, all but ripe for “retirement on pension,” *i.e.*, well past his best. So the lieges will be served, until it suits the Government and Sir Gordon to serve them better. Has any reader heard anything in the legal line quite so scandalous?

I SPOKE the other day with a friend who has lately travelled a good deal as an expert in metallurgy in industrial Europe, and kept at the same time a fairly level eye on the situation here. He said in effect:—“The workmen are on the wrong road. They link high wages with low productivity, and are ruining our foreign trade in consequence. It is impossible (for example) for us to compete with Belgium (where the men are working almost feverishly, on a system of high premiums); the Belgian price for steel rails is £4 a ton below ours, or £3 10s. allowing for a slight superiority in the English goods. We cannot touch them within 10 per cent. As for wages, I am for keeping up the high standard, though they are not quite fairly distributed, for masses of workmen were underpaid before the war. But the men are in the clouds when they talk of taking over the factories. They have not the experience or the specially developed brains. Partnership? Yes; within limits. I should certainly admit workers to the directorate. But big works are not run by boards of directors; they are run by the managing director, with almost autocratic powers of buying, which he uses well, and not danger-

ously, because of his large interest in the business. Committees can't run businesses, as the Russians will soon find out, if they have not found it out already. In other words, I'm for an advance, but if the workman thinks that he can bring the industrial system down by 'ca' canny,' he may do so, but he will ruin himself in the act."

It is clear that the wind of the spirit, when it once begins to blow through the English literary mind, possesses a surprising power of penetration. A few weeks ago it was pleased to aim a simultaneous blast in the direction of a book known to some generations of men as "Moby Dick." A member of the staff of THE NATION was thereupon moved in the ancient Hebrew fashion to buy and to read it. He then expressed himself on the subject, incoherently indeed, but with signs of emotion as intense and as pleasingly uncouth as Man Friday betrayed at the sight of his long-lost father. While struggling with his article, and wondering what the deuce it could mean, I received a letter from a famous literary man, marked on the outside "Urgent," and on the inner scroll of the MS. itself "A Rhapsody." It was about "Moby Dick." Having observed a third article on the same subject, of an equally febrile kind, I began to read "Moby Dick" myself. Having done so I hereby declare, being of sane intellect, that since letters began there never was such a book, and that the mind of man is not constructed so as to produce such another; that I put its author with Rabelais, Swift, Shakespeare, and other minor and disputable worthies; and that I advise any adventurer of the soul to go at once into the morose and prolonged retreat necessary for its deglutition. And having said this, I decline to say another word on the subject now and for evermore.

THE journal of the League of Nations, which published the report of the meetings of the Assembly at Geneva, contained a rather unexpected Envoi. At the end of the last page appeared the following:—

"Un peu d'espoir  
Un peu de rêve  
Et puis—Bon soir!"

There was no clue to the humorist who had provided the journal with this apostolic benediction.

A WAYFARER.

## Life and Letters.

### THE JAZZ BAND.

"The savage music of the Jazz band" has sounded to some effect in Dover. Its overthrow of one of the strong political caucuses, in a region never anything but Conservative, and against a candidate who combined the advantages of a wounded soldier and a millionaire, deserves some impartial study in political psychology. Lord Rothermere, one of the chief promoters of the entertainment, has declared that this organized body could win any seat in Southern England; and especially any seat in suburban Southern England, such as those of the middle-classes surrounding London. And it is probably true that the machinery, as at present constructed by its inventors, would produce a result

similar to that at Dover. For the Jazz band exhibits a formidable apparatus of appeal, alike to prejudice and to principle. It is entirely independent of any local support. It can pick itself up and plant itself down in any district in which the electors are asked to give a decision. It resembles a flashlight which cannot illuminate all the country a part of the time, or even a part of the country all the time, but can be directed for a moment with concentrated vividness upon any particular region previously lost in darkness. Its methods are simple. It appeals to anyone who is discontented with anything. It states that if its candidate is elected the Government will be compelled to remove the cause of discontent. Its policy is purely offensive. One of Mr. Wells's heroines, attacking the British public, desired to "get it by the throat." She discovered sadly that "it hadn't got a throat." The Jazz band candidate "hasn't got a throat." The Government supporters come under a hail of hammer-blows which they feebly ward off, one supposes, till a fresh volley descends on them to-morrow. They have a past, and they may have a future. The Jazz men as a party have neither past nor future. They can concentrate on the present, and the public is only interested in the present. If, as individuals, they have a past such as that of General Townshend, they can exploit it. They can turn the edge of all questions concerning the criticism of an alternative Government by stating that they have no wish to form an alternative Government, but only to make this Government do right. To the friends of Mr. Lloyd George they declare that they only wish to save him from the "duds" who have been landed on him by the Conservative chiefs. To the orthodox Conservatives they can say that they only wish to save them from the recklessness and foolishness of Mr. Lloyd George. In Ramsgate, they demand general anti-waste and reduction of Government expenditure, with the special exception of the Government port near Ramsgate. In Dover they demand a reduction in Government expenditure, with the special exception of the Government port of Dover. When they sweep forward in triumph to bray in the streets (say) of Hastings, they will demand retrenchment everywhere except in the potential Government port of Hastings. So Wisdom is justified of all her children.

The appeal itself, however, would count for little but for the use of a carefully organized machinery to drive it home. It is not the melody of the instruments, but the ferocious nature of the sound they produce. There is, first, a perpetually appearing campaign circular in the form of their syndicated newspapers, pictorial and otherwise, with which at a bye-election the whole electorate can be daily irrigated. These methods, of course, drive a coach and four through the new Corrupt Practices Act, which forbids outside organizations to interfere in elections in the interests of any candidate, unless their cost is included in the candidate's election expenses return. The total cost of such a victory as that of Dover would probably "stagger humanity," if it were revealed. But, it would appear, there is nothing to prevent the "Daily Mail" and "Daily Mirror" (say) from pursuing their normal trade enterprise in an election region while at the same time appearing as election leaflets. They engage Mr. Bottomley in the service, who, with his plea for national righteousness, his devotion to "the boys" who have served in the war and his creed of "God and a business Government," sets a healthy tone to the campaign. And, above all, they have established a formidable canvassing machine of men who descend into the constituency suddenly from outside, whose origin and position are unknown to the individual

voter on the doorstep, and who pour stories into his astonished ear, sometimes true, sometimes not quite so true, of the facts as to the character of their opponent's candidate and of their own.

Serious advocates of reform may regard the antics of this menagerie with amusement, and without foreboding. It is only in that part of Southern England which is dead to political ideals, that its apparatus can work effectively. Without such an expenditure of money as even the wealthy men behind it would probably not be prepared to give, it can work at bye-elections only. There is no reason why Tory strongholds in suburbs or seaside watering places, represented by undistinguished Tory profiteers in Parliament, and dominated, as a rule, by a corrupt party organization, should not be stormed by the Anti-Waste fanatics. There is no serious prospect for good or evil of Mr. Lloyd George's domination being abandoned by the country in favor of the domination of Lord Rothermere and Mr. Bottomley. The same tactics were attempted in the war time when Mr. Pemberton Billing was thrust into Parliament for a safe Tory seat at Hertford. But the machinery collapsed in a succeeding contest against a Liberal at Leicester, and a Tory (again) in the West Country, and nothing more was heard of it until to-day. It is a good thing that electors should be informed of the waste and extravagance of the Government, and recalled to the Liberal principle of retrenchment, even if that message is proclaimed by queer instruments playing queer tunes. It is a good thing that the Government should be attacked in regions where it thought itself invulnerable, and that a godly or ungodly fear for their future should influence the minds of its supporters, who care nothing for justice or compassion. And it is probably a good thing that, even through such questionable machinery as is here adopted, the electors should be stirred up into political interest and action.

In the case of Dover, both parties agree in attributing the result largely to the new women's vote. The difficulty hitherto has been not to get the woman voter to vote right, but to get her to vote at all. When once she has learnt to use her liberty, the spell is broken, and the right use of liberty is rendered, for the first time, possible. Ten per cent. more of the electors voted in Dover than in Hereford. That extra ten per cent. was evidently almost entirely anti-Government. And if Hereford could have been stimulated to action, even by this "savage music," it would have returned a result similar to that of Dover. The impartial observer of English public life to-day, in which the majority of voters are at once profoundly disgusted with their present rulers, and sceptical of any improvement through political means, will be inclined to welcome any stirring of the stagnant waters, however remarkable the methods or questionable the motives. The vital requirement of British politics is that they should become alive.

"Son of man, stand on thy feet, and I will speak with thee," was the challenge of the Hebrew prophet. If the "savage music" can bring the elector to his feet, it may, all unconsciously, be making for national welfare.

#### DEMOCRACY ON THE DEFENSIVE.

THE headlines of a rather remarkable article in the "Daily Express" caught our eye one day this week, as a fellow-passenger was reading it in the train. It was an argument that much of the present unemployment might be traced to the penury of Central Europe, since its currencies have fallen to a level which forbids any

purchases from us. There was nothing remarkable about the article, save the fact that it appeared in the place of honor in the "Express." This rather belated discovery started a train of thought. Just two years ago, the writer was a candidate in a Scottish constituency, and fought the election mainly on the issue of the indemnity. He predicted the unemployment which has now come. He argued for trade with Germany and Russia, and for their speedy restoration to productivity. He opposed any indemnity that went beyond "restoration," partly as a violation of the Fourteen Points, and partly on the ground that it must mean (if it could be paid at all) trade without the stimulus of exchange, and a flood of imports into our markets with no equivalent exports. The audiences were courteous and attentive, as in that part of Scotland they usually are. But the writer had no illusions as to the disastrous effect he was producing. His supporters begged him to expound some other subject for choice.

One realized what the result would be (and, in fact, it was crushing) when one heard the furious cheers at the Coalition meetings, as the other candidate promised to make the Germans pay the whole cost of the war. Two years later it begins to dawn, even on the newspaper which forced the pace in that election, that the economic ruin of the enemy may be an injury to ourselves. But the mischief is done. Mr. George was carried into power on the flood of vindictive passions which he let loose. They wrote themselves into the Treaties, and no belated wisdom now, even if it should spread to France, can undo the suffering which this folly has caused to half a Continent, and in a less degree to ourselves. Some foresaw it. Some struggled against it. They came away from the polls doubting whether in such a case reasoned argument can ever suffice. In one little town of that constituency it was possible to count the number of voters who attended the meetings of both sides. The same people went to hear both candidates, and their audiences were, within two or three units, equally numerous. But only about five per cent. of the electors heard any of the arguments at all.

With these reflections, we turned to Mr. Graham Wallas's "Human Nature in Politics," one of the few books of its kind which are worth reading again and again. The new edition (Constable, 12s. 6d.) brings nothing fresh, save a preface, to add to the wisdom of the old, but the preface ends upon a note of optimism. It is not easy to share the hopes which Mr. Wallas bases on the growing influence of the "young thinkers of our time." The years which have passed since the book was first written have greatly strengthened the force of its critical chapters. Most of us are now painfully aware of the fallacy of the intellectualism which underlay the classical statements of the democratic creed. Experience has backed the new psychology, and there is no longer much danger that we should err by trusting in the almost automatic working of the intellectual processes of a democracy, when it is summoned to reason about its own interests. No one would now be found to dispute the devastating analysis which Mr. Wallas brings to bear upon the actual mental processes of the electorate, when it chooses a candidate. The power of instinct, impulse, and non-rational inference are more than ever in evidence, and it is now almost a commonplace to say that the arts which win an election are those of the advertiser and not those of the logician.

Mr. Wallas looked forward a little sadly to the probability that a politician might arise who would consciously play upon the non-rational instincts of the herd, while regarding himself the while as the rational "over-



man" who controls them. He cited Disraeli and Lord Randolph Churchill as men who introduced this "ruthless" element into politics, but events have thrown up a much more ruthless, a much less scrupulous, practitioner than either of them. Mr. George's success reduces the rational element in democratic politics to the lowest and most negligible level which English experience has ever known. There may be a revolt against this degradation of politics on the part of the "young thinkers" of the "unprivileged population" on whom Mr. Wallas bases his hopes, but it does not follow the beaten track of the democratic tradition. As for the mass, the effect upon it is rather that it makes less and less pretence of taking politics seriously. It regards them as a badly organized form of sport, with rather lax rules. It is completely cynical as to motives. It is not really deceived by the promises which seem to win elections. It votes for the most spirited performer: it likes to be "in the swim" and "on the winning side": it rather enjoys the process of being tickled and misled by a "spell-binder," provided that the thing is done with skill and verve. But it no more venerates its hero than it venerates a cinema star, and its attitude to "stunts" is pretty much its attitude to new films.

The doubt about the working of democracy has gone somewhat deeper since Mr. Wallas wrote. His mainly psychological criticism reappears in the minds of those "young thinkers" with a sharp economic bias. It is rather easy to show that the odds in working, by the arts of advertisement, those irrational processes of inference which determine the voter's mind, are heavily weighted in favor of property. Legislation may do something, and has done something, to limit the power of wealth during the brief period of an election. Labor, though it cannot afford to contest, and still less to "nurse" every constituency, can, and does, spend as much, or nearly as much, as its opponent upon the actual appeals addressed during the contest to the eye of the elector. But the real determining factors of opinion are beyond any legislative control. Opinion is made between elections mainly by the "capitalist" Press, and even during elections it counts for infinitely more than the posters and leaflets of the candidates. Add to that direct manufacture of opinion through the selection and presentation of news, the incalculable forces of suggestion and pressure which the wealthy and employing classes possess, and it is easy for any revolutionary party to build up a case against democracy as an elaborate *camouflage* for the "dictatorship of the bourgeoisie."

That is, in fact, the case which Trotsky, by far the ablest writer among the Russian Communists, has made for revolution, in his brilliant polemical reply to Kautsky. The Russian Marxists proceed on the same intellectualist assumptions as the English Utilitarians, who laid the basis of our liberal theory. They, too, assume that men are guided in politics by a rational calculation of interests, mainly economic, but they object that the working masses, imperfectly educated, enjoying little leisure, and doomed to be instructed by a Press which belongs to the class "enemy," cannot, in fact, make this calculation for itself. Therefore, they argue, the class-conscious minority of the workers must be prepared to seize power, and to exercise a dictatorship until conditions are equalized. Mr. Wallas would answer, one supposes, to this new phase of the intellectualist position, that the *bourgeoisie* no more "calculates" than does the "proletariat." That may be true in the sense that the mental processes of the Nonconformist business-man, for example, whom he plies with gentle satire, are not strictly rational. But here, it may be, the psychological

analysis halts a little. There may be in all the unreason a shrewder sub-conscious trend of interested selection than Mr. Wallas has detected. Not every "suggestion" sticks. Not every "impulse" finds the path of action. Those are selected which fit the dominant interests of the man. Dangerous generousities are repressed. Mr. Wallas's psychology, based mainly on James, needs some revision in the light of Freud.

The theoretical answer must doubtless still be upon the lines which Mr. Wallas has indicated. It amounts, however, not so much to a defence of democracy, as to a warning against the inevitable mischiefs of a dictatorship. Mr. Wallas discusses Plato's guardians and the Indian Civil Servants—oddly enough, the two models to which Mr. Bertrand Russell has compared the Russian Communist dictatorship. Government without consent, whether one trusts to the "noble lie" of a Platonic mythology (which, by the way, was also the usual solution of the aristocratic rationalists of the eighteenth century) or to force, will almost inevitably mean in practice that the class, or caste, or party which exercises the dictatorship, however sincerely it may start with the most disinterested ambitions, ends by concentrating much, or most, of its attention on the effort to retain power. Power, which, at first, was only a means to the end of the general good, becomes an end in itself, and when once the dictators reach the point of coercing and repressing the mass which they set out to elevate and benefit, they may go further until they come to regard as an enemy these troublesome and stupid people, who are for ever thwarting their best designs.

That point has not yet arrived in Russia, but even there the Bolsheviks seem at times to be strapping a strait waistcoat on to the body of the sovereign proletariat. They have, however, methods which may save them in the end. They use force without scruple, but they always back force by propaganda, and work very hard to make a public opinion among the masses favorable to their decrees. Again, it must be said for them that they are toiling at education, as no other Government in the world is doing, or has ever done, and, allowing for their material difficulties, the results are amazingly good. One of two things will happen. Either they will win the full consent of the new educated generation, or else they will give it the intellectual equipment to judge their *régime*, and to replace it by another and a more democratic one. In other words, the dictatorship will lead, and is even intended to lead, to some form of government by consent, but there will be many a tragedy before that stage is reached. We agree with the main conclusion of Mr. Wallas, that democracy can save itself only by education, and also that it must beware of educating on a barren intellectualist plan. The State must be loved, before it commands service. From that conclusion, however, one turns to the day's news, which tells that Mr. Fisher's education scheme, meagre as it is, is to be postponed on the score of expense. It is hard to love a State which behaves in this way, and it is difficult to see a future for a democracy which starves education. Democracy is on the defensive, and it does not know it.

#### A SPECTATOR.

MEETING a man of genius in person and in private life is always a dubious experiment. In the first place the visitor is likely to be overwhelmed in the presence of greatness, as Heine tells he was when he called on Goethe and could only remark what jolly plums grew on the road from Jena to Weimar. And besides, the great man himself may not be at his best. He is tired,

his mind is relaxed. The fruit of genius is not perennial. It comes and goes, and you may light upon the tree in a dead season. Goethe's own conversations are about the wisest and most charming ever recorded, but Eckermann tells us that on certain days the poet's mind seemed chilled and frozen, as though a wintry wind passed over it. Few could pour out such abundance of thought with such splendor of language as George Meredith, on almost any day, and at any hour; but even he could not be always depended on. Nor could Ruskin, the next best talker whom the present writer has heard, among men of genius. Such meetings are likely to bring disappointment, especially if brief. Johnson's conversations, it is true, remain as a perpetual delight; but their record was extended over many years, and Boswell left many gaps.

That is all true enough, but still most of us are attracted to the man—the instrument or channel of genius—even when genius is not actually at work or running full tide. We are curious—perhaps too curious—to know what he is like in ordinary life, in his back parlor, and without his robes. We like to hear what he thinks about the common interests of the day—the horrors of the peace, the state of Ireland, the future of politics, the picture galleries, the theatres, and other subjects of innocent social converse. And it has occurred to some writers of genius that it might be a profitable thing for all concerned to give us freely in print what we should evidently like to hear. It has been rather cruelly said that newspapers and magazines have ruined conversation, because clever people keep their best thoughts and sayings to themselves on the chance of selling them afterwards. If they gave them out in talk, the wit and wisdom might become stale, or other people might sell them! That is not true of a really opulent nature, so full of fine thoughts that he can pour them out, forgetful and indifferent as a sower scattering grain from a heavy sack. But when the man of genius does make a note of his thoughts and gives them to the world to read, we are grateful, even though we have heard some of them before and other people have pilfered them. That does not matter; there is always plenty. We are grateful, for instance, for Samuel Butler's "Note Books," for Matthew Arnold's "Note Books," and for Ruskin's "Arrows of the Chase."

And now Mr. Arnold Bennett gives us his little volume, called "Things that have Interested Me." (Chatto & Windus.) It is a collection of notes upon passing events during the last few years, during which events have passed with some rapidity. The notes are from short articles and letters to the papers, casual remarks, criticisms, jottings of things heard or seen, and personal reflections. Reading the book is like conversing upon interesting subjects with a clever man. True, it is monologue; but the conversation of clever people often is; and any reader can easily supply his own remarks, approval, or objections, which are likely to seem as unimportant as is usual in such intercourse. Here we have the man of genius appearing in ordinary life—in his back parlor, and without his robes, as we said. We hear what he has got to say on all manner of subjects which interest him and almost everybody else—books and reading, theatres, pictures, politics, international relations, schools, social behavior, the aristocracy, and boxing. The notes are like the casual observations of a man of genius when he is living and looking about him like the rest of us, and his deep and underlying genius is at rest like a big fish at the bottom of the ocean, or Behemoth sleeping in the jungle like a child.

There is no order or arrangement according to subject, such as we find in the "Note Books" of Samuel Butler, that most orderly man of genius. We must take the subjects haphazard as they come, just as we generally do in conversation. Let us give instances of only a few, taking them haphazard as they come. The present writer particularly likes the note called "A Great Responsibility"—a conversation with a lady who wished to convict the author of making vice attractive by such books as "The Pretty Lady." She could not move him from the position that "he would go on writing whatever he wanted to write, and people would have to stick it." The passage is too long to quote, but let us remember the conclusion: "Of all which the lesson is that the artist must suffer the righteous gladly." Take rather this shorter passage upon Wilfred Scawen Blunt's "Diaries," and his praise of "The Souls":—

"They certainly were clever—apparently they could write brilliant poems between two sets of lawn tennis; they were highly diverting conversationalists, and their heads must have held a tremendous mass of facts. But, with every advantage, what did they amount to after all? What was their achievement? They were more remarkable for self-indulgence and caprice and irregular hours than for any sort of steady endeavor. Their education taught them neither discipline nor tenacity of purpose nor the art of life. They had not the supreme intelligence, for the supreme intelligence consists in an understanding of the value of deportment. They were in the public eye, and the most famous of them, particularly the women, simply did not know how to behave—and to this day do not know how to behave."

The reference has become fairly obvious lately, and we suppose that in this righteous outburst we must suffer Mr. Bennett gladly. But we prefer his account of an "International" dinner, of which he writes:—

"An immense cackle uprose of philosophy, the arts, literature. And through this dizzying cackle a patient and clever valet and an English parlormaid kept their heads, serving very well a fairish dinner. No surcease in the discussion. The talkers picked up the universe and shook it like a rat."

Still better do we like the satire of the note upon "Travel and Politics," describing the high degree of stupidity one finds in English people at hotels abroad:—

"Politically I have invariably suffered a great solitude in the best foreign hotels. Indeed, the unanimity of British political opinion abroad amounts to a most imposing phenomenon. On the other hand, I have never heard an intelligent political discussion in English in a foreign hotel. Never! And I have lived much in foreign hotels. On social questions the British attitude in hotels was admirably illustrated by the remark of a beautiful and elegant tennis-playing girl at Cannes, *à propos* of a miners' strike: 'They ought to be forced down the pits and made to work.'"

How well one knows that detestable girl, and her detestable brother, who is sure to continue, "What I say is, Shoot them all!" It is good, and also proper, to find Mr. Bennett on the side of reason and liberal thought. One of his finest notes is the brief satire called "Pro-Germanism," in which he complains of a strange leniency about our magistrature:—

"Two women of the mature ages of twenty and twenty-one respectively were guilty of repeatedly asking that tea should be given to two German prisoners in the vicinity of Farnborough. They also wrote to a German prisoner and enclosed to him a packet of cigarettes. Will it be believed that these unpatriotic females were fined only three guineas each? . . . What hidden hand is protecting these females? Do not imagine that the instance is isolated. There may be, there probably is, an extensive secret organization functioning in our midst. Thus the other day a woman, whose son had fought for us at Jutland, gave sixpence to a German prisoner who was passing through Cheltenham in charge

of some horses. She was fined £7 10s.—three hundred times her offence. But why was she not sentenced to penal servitude for life?"

Pleasant anecdotes are scattered through the book, as in pleasant social converse—the story, for instance, of the English officer who was captured by the Germans, was reported killed, and on his return was presented with a bill: "To Memorial Service (fully choral), three guineas." And there are interesting personal touches besides, as when, after giving up the keys of his beloved flat in Paris, he writes:—

"I should probably have enjoyed myself more in France, only I prefer to live in England and regret France than to live in France and regret England. I think the permanent exile is a pathetic figure. I suppose I have a grim passion for England. But I know why France is the darling of nations."

Whilst we are in the way with it, we may point out a misquotation, copied from the newspaper article in which the note first appeared. The passage runs: "In a new exhibition of war pictures by Mr. Nevinson (who is a wit as well as an artist) is a fanciful portrait of a repellent type, thus labelled: 'He made a fortune and gave a sum.'" The original label, we believe, was, "He made a fortune and he gave a son," the satire being emphasized by a photograph upon the marble mantel-piece beside the profiteer's smug and self-complacent head—a photograph of a young man in uniform, the frame surrounded with a neat arrangement of crape.

As we said, the notes are like the interesting conversation of a clever man—of a man whose genius was shown in "The Old Wives' Tale," "Clayhanger," "Buried Alive," "The Card," and so many more well-known books. We are grateful to have them, for they are the passing remarks of an interested and interesting spectator of our time and existence. The present writer always feels some doubt as to the position of a spectator and the power of the word. He remembers the old Persian who said, foreseeing his country's ruin: "There is no greater anguish known among mankind than to have many thoughts at heart and no power of deed." He remembers that Mr. Larkin, Carlyle's industrious assistant, used to attribute his master's melancholy to the craving for the opportunity of carrying his denunciations into action. The writer himself, when sent to record warfare by sea and land, has often regretted the family poverty which could train him only to be a mere spectator instead of allowing him the opportunity of committing even greater mistakes than the generals or admirals around him. How often, like Faust, has he puzzled over that difficult and dubious saying, "In the beginning was the Word!" But Mr. Bennett appears to be content to watch and speak. His ideal of writing and of the power of the word is high and unshaken. From the reader also he demands the recognition of an ideal. He is not of those who regard reading merely as an escape from the dullness or tedium or absence of adventure in common life. He would agree that such reading is no better than dram-drinking. "What is the object of reading," he asks, "unless something definite comes of it? You would be better advised to play billiards." What is the sense of reading history, philosophy, morals, or biography, unless it affects your own life and action in the present world? Or, finally, within his own sphere of literature, "Where is the sense of reading poetry or fiction unless you see more beauty, more passion, more scope for your sympathy, than you saw before?" Coming from the man who has made us feel such beauty, such passion, such scope for sympathy in what appeared to be just the most dull and drab and unpromising region of all our country, that is a just demand for the power of the word.

## The Drama.

### "THE BETROTHAL."

"THE BETROTHAL" is a play about a young man's search for his ideal mate; and he finds her, of course, where he least expects to do so, in a veiled figure of forgotten Joy which follows him throughout the general scrutiny of all other possible brides. Tytyl is finally settled in life by an elimination dictated by his forbears and the ultimate recognition of her mother by his first potential daughter. This is a pretty fancy, and it is skilfully handled; but it is not the whole of the inspiration of the play. There is a good deal of sentimentality in Monsieur Maeterlinck's treatment of a common biological theory which places the individual unimportantly between his ancestors and his offspring; and this sentimentality arises largely from a serious and moralizing treatment of what should have been unalloyed fantasy. The modern Gallic demand for repopulation is a curious thing to express by means of a work of the imagination, and yet this is the spur behind the play. Tytyl is to have at least six children, and the number of his descendants defies computation. It is the fault of "The Betrothal" that it is not sufficiently imaginative, and that it pretends to belong to creative art when in fact it deals shallowly with the questions of heredity and natural selection. It is allegorical or applied inventiveness, and is concerned with theory rather than with the poetic individualization of humanity. None the less, the production as a whole has notable charm, and the beauty of the stage pictures would in itself atone for the author's strained seriousness of conception and expression. Tytyl and his choice of a bride matter less than the extremely beautiful decoration provided by those who have been called to serve as auxiliaries to Monsieur Maeterlinck.

The truth is that Monsieur Maeterlinck's biological conception is not very distantly removed from the social custom of yesterday, and perhaps even of to-day, when the relatives—sisters, cousins, aunts, grandparents—of both bride and bridegroom took (and, I am afraid, take still) a particularly active share in the making of the match. Tytyl's oldest ancestor is not much unlike a cautious father, bent upon seeing that his son makes a wise choice. He is a funny old creature, but he belongs to a patriarchal society, and there is no poetry or subtlety in his examination of the six young women who all wish to marry Tytyl. They are simply six young persons who have been brought home for inspection. They do not pass the family tests. They are not "approved." One feels that marriage with one of them would have to be lived down—not that it is rendered impossible by biological law. The ancestors are not irresistible forces in Tytyl's blood, but ghoulish social remains who interfere with his freedom of choice. They are even continental in that, for in England we have a legend that marriages are made for love, and that parents count for nothing in the formation of attachments. However, Monsieur Maeterlinck takes refuge in biology, and we cannot of course quarrel with what is now an accepted theory of marriage as a eugenic negotiation.

Apart from this underlying thesis, the play consists of a number of loosely related scenes, a really adorable ballet, and much fancy that might be tender if it were not so logical. It is Monsieur Maeterlinck's logic which destroys his fun and which gives his imaginings an air of insincerity. This is the constitutional defect, it has always seemed to me, of French fairy tales, which are graceful, charming, dexterous, but never childishly absorbed in the same way as their English and German rivals. Monsieur Maeterlinck, in telling this fairy tale, has summoned biology and allegory to help him, and "The Betrothal" has the same prime imaginative defect as "The Blue Bird." The play is by the dramatist who made his little boy exclaim: "There are no dead!" The same little boy now says, in effect: "There is no love! There is only natural selection." We must not disagree; but we may perhaps question the poetry and beauty of the conception, and we may also debate its



universality in a complex civilization. At the same time we may suggest that great art has never yet been the mouthpiece of current science gossip.

The scenery and costumes by Mr. Charles Ricketts have a splendid boldness and richness which make them quite remarkably distinguished. The play of color and movement in the ballet is such that one is moved to deep æsthetic emotion. All the scenery is broad and effective in treatment, and although one's breath is sometimes taken away the result is beautifully satisfying. The cast, on the whole, is excellent, and the general standard of good looks is impressive. Moreover, the scene of recognition between the hitherto undiscovered bride and her first baby is given with such sincerity that while it resembles rather the recovery of a truant child than the mystical *rapprochement* of the author's intention, it is very striking. All the grouping and general stage management emphasize the importance of Mr. Granville Barker's place in the programme. So far as production goes I do not see how the play could have been better given. If this production is literal, so also is "The Betrothal." It is not an obscure or an abstruse play. Its one obscurity is to be found in the continually shrinking figure of Destiny, but here it may be supposed that as our acceptance of the eugenic theory increases, our romantic fatalism will diminish. The figure of Joy is not at all obscure; but it was a stroke of inspiration to engage Miss Gladys Cooper for this almost speechless part. Her first appearance is the signal for excitement in the theatre, and her performance when she is at last unveiled is in every way to be admired. It should be recognized that the play is a charming, and at the same time a wonderful, spectacle. Intellectually it does not seem to me to have any importance, although it is full of simplicities which create delightful impressions. I have already suggested that it is less imaginative than fanciful, and less fanciful than deliberately and morally incredulous of that reality and that romantic love which it is given to some human beings to feel. It is the work of a logical brain, of limited power but exemplary lucidity, and its defects lie profoundly in its lack of humor and imagination. This lack does not prevent the play from affording great pleasure in the theatre, and as a spectacle, "The Betrothal" is really an affair of unusual beauty.

FRANK SWINNERTON.

## Letters to the Editor.

### THE IRISH DIVISIONS IN THE WAR.

SIR,—Will you grant me the hospitality of your columns to refute some of Mr. Hammond's misstatements regarding the history of Ireland since July, 1914? That I am well qualified to do so is due to my having been appointed, by Colonel Moore, Inspector-General of the County Wicklow Volunteers on the outbreak of war, and to having served as an officer in both the Irish Divisions—the 10th and the 16th—from September 21st, 1914, until July, 1915, when I went to France on active service.

In August and September, 1914, I inspected all the companies of the Wicklow Irish Nationalist Volunteers; I found them to be very ill-disciplined and inefficient, hardly anyone being competent to be an officer or non-commissioned officer. I, nevertheless, exhorted them to volunteer to fight Germany on the side of Ireland's old ally, France, in the cause of Humanity, Justice, and Right. I found no enthusiasm whatever, and was frequently interrupted during my speeches with cries of: "Not so much about the Germans! England is our enemy, and always will be!"

In disgust, I resigned my position and joined the Dublin Fusiliers; more than half my battalion was composed of Londoners and Welshmen, as Irish recruits were not forthcoming. When, on March 1st, 1915, I was transferred to the 16th Irish Division I found that its infantry units were so short of men, owing to the impossibility of Irish recruits being obtained, that there was no chance of the Division going to the front for many months; the artillery of this Division

was, accordingly, transferred, and served in France as the Guards' organic artillery throughout the war.

This, I think, disposes of Mr. Hammond's contention that all the youth of Ireland were on fire to fight alongside England against Germany, provided they might march to the music of Gaelic pipes, beneath some oriflamme of the Dark Rosaleen.

I now turn to the question of R.C. Irish officers: I do not believe that the military authorities had any prejudice whatever against creating officers from the Roman Catholic youths—I am sure Generals Mahon and Parsons had none—but the truth is it was quite impossible to find men amongst them who were fitted, by character and education, to lead men; it would have been a crime to send soldiers into action led by such inherently incompetent officers. In the 16th Division a big effort was made, but such young R.C. Irishmen as were given commissions at the commencement had no sense of discipline, or of duty to their men or their superiors. They were consumed with vanity, idle, dirty, and ignorant: their one idea, on coming off parade, was to rush off to the nearest town and show themselves off in their uniform, to swagger about, and have a spree. They were utterly heedless of the comfort and welfare of their men.

If regiments of Irish Volunteers had been formed, as Mr. Hammond suggests, and had been sent to the front, their want of discipline and ignorance of military training must have led them to disgrace and disaster.

While English Divisions of Kitchener's Army were formed and trained and hurried to the front, the 16th Division lingered on at home, by reason of the inferior quality of its officers and the impossibility of obtaining recruits, their want of zeal, industry, and character.

The whole tone of Mr. Hammond's article shows him to be utterly ignorant of Irish life and Irish politics; he is like a naturalist who would describe the fauna of Central Africa from his study in Hampstead; he does not deal with realities, but with conditions as he would wish them to be; he has been briefed by someone who, regardless of the truth, desires to create an impression upon the readers of THE NATION.

I know Mr. Hammond to be a sincere, honest man and a believer in Ireland's pretensions to be a nation and to be granted independence. He has been humbugged!

I myself was formerly a keen, enthusiastic believer in Irish Nationalism; but I went to Ireland in 1912 and, for two years, threw myself, heart and soul, into the Irish Nationalist movement. I got to know most of the leaders and to understand them. I became utterly disillusioned, and I was converted. To-day I am more Unionist than the Union Jack. I am convinced that, if Ireland were granted independence, she would become like the Republic of Hayti, or one of the most barbarous of the South American Republics, where murder and corruption are the normal conditions of public and commercial life, and where religion is a debased and degrading superstition.—Yours, &c.,

HENRY DE MONTMORENCY.

34, Clifton Hill, London, N.W. 8.

January 11th, 1921.

SIR,—I am obliged to you for a sight of Major de Montmorency's letter. Since he has set out his qualifications to speak with special competence, I give mine. In January, 1915, I joined, as a private, the "cadet company" of the 7th Leinsters, 16th Division, to which were sent such recruits as seemed suitable material for officers. I spent three months in it, so that I knew very well in the ranks about a hundred of those who afterwards became officers in the division. In April, 1915, I was commissioned to the 6th Connaught Rangers, went with them as part of the division to France in December, 1915, and commanded my company till the end of May, 1916; and later from October, 1916, to April, 1917.

The proportion of Catholics among our officers was not large. But Major de Montmorency is the first person I have heard to assert that they were inferior to the others. At least half of them who conspicuously made good in our battalion as officers were Catholics.

As to the Volunteers, I had very little personal knowledge of the organization. But a very large proportion of

the men in our brigade, and especially of the picked men in it, had been Irish Volunteers before they became soldiers.

On the question of recruiting, I may say that from January to July, 1915 (that is, until I became a company officer), I was sent nearly every Saturday and Sunday on recruiting work. I seldom found enthusiastic meetings, but I never met the kind of interruption which Major de Montmorency describes. Naturally, he would meet it, if anywhere, in the Volunteer bodies, because, rightly or wrongly, Redmond would not accept the initiation of forming Volunteers. They were called into being mainly by the minority, which was in opposition to the whole Constitutional movement. But the mass of the Volunteers came in when Redmond accepted the movement, and went with him when the split occurred in September, 1914. Up to that the other element was present, and could, naturally, make itself heard.

As to the delay in getting the 16th Division to France, may I recall that the Ulster Division, based upon a Volunteer organization which nearly a year before the war was pronounced by Colonel Repington equal to regulars, did not leave England till September, 1915. We were less than three months behind it. The 10th Division was three months earlier.

I have written in "John Redmond's Last Years" concerning the policy of the War Office in regard to Irish recruiting, and am of opinion that very many more men could have been got from Ireland by wiser methods, including many of those who subsequently did their best to neutralize our efforts. That opinion is based on a knowledge of Ireland, and all the relevant facts at least equal to Major de Montmorency's. My concern, however, is with his statement that it was "impossible to find men among the Roman Catholic youth fitted to lead men." If I ever had to go into action again, or send men into action, I could ask for no better leaders than Irish Catholics whom I have known in command of men or serving under my command. I knew them in action: it does not appear that he did.—Yours, &c.,

STEPHEN GWYNN.

#### MR. BOURCHIER ON WESTERN THRACE.

SIR,—Mr. J. D. Bouchier was so well known to the readers of THE NATION (not only as the leading authority on Balkan affairs, but in very many cases as a personal friend) that his latest utterances will have peculiar interest for them.

In a letter from Sofia, which reached me just before his death, he expressed his alarm at the existing treaty arrangements as to Balkan frontiers, and laid special emphasis on Western Thrace.

"Western Thrace," he wrote, "should be allowed autonomy. In this way Bulgaria could obtain a better access to the Aegean than she could ever hope for, should Greece be allowed to retain the province. Whatever hope of fair treatment for Bulgarian commerce in transit there might have been had Greece remained Venizelist has now disappeared, and, if the existing arrangement is allowed to stand, Bulgaria must be regarded as permanently excluded from the Aegean.

"The present moment is certainly favorable for raising the question. Britain is threatened with great scarcity of wheat next year, while Bulgaria has had a bumper harvest this autumn. Bulgarian wheat now shipped in the Danubian ports has to pay 14 per cent. more freightage and to travel 40 extra nautical miles on its way to British ports. It must be remembered that most of the wheat (if not all) passing through Galatz and Braila is called 'Roumanian wheat.' The real solution of the question would be the attribution to Bulgaria of a territorial access to Kavala through territory inhabited by Bulgarians (see Kiepert's map). Should any objection be raised to the assignment of the town (which is about two-thirds Moslem) to Bulgaria, the precedent set by arrangement regarding Dantzig and Fiume might be followed. The three cases are practically on all fours. In 1912 and 1913 Venizelos repeatedly admitted to me and others the right of Bulgaria to an outlet at Kavala."

Anyone who is concerned for the prevention of future wars will recognize that in these latest words of his Mr. Bouchier put his finger on the real danger spot.—Yours, &c.,

NOEL BUXTON.

12, Rutland Gate, S.W. 7. January 20th, 1921.

#### AN APPEAL FROM WIENER NEUSTADT.

SIR,—May I write not only to bear out what M. Edith Durham says in her letter in THE NATION of December 18th, but also to say that we are now starting relief work in Wiener Neustadt, an industrial town with a working-class population, thirty miles from Vienna.

This place has a most progressive Mayor, who is doing all he can to help his people. He has already turned the military hospital into a Welfare Centre, with a Home for babies in one wing, for children in another. In the woods outside the town he has transformed old army huts into an open-air school, co-educational, for 200 of the poorest and most starving, tubercular children of all classes.

There is a tubercular dispensary which examines and keeps records, sending the worst cases to a tubercular hospital for treatment. They really need cod liver oil and food, and milk if it could be got. They have a Mothers' School, a school doctor, a school nurse, a vocational secretary. The organization is there, but they are everywhere met by the want of food and clothing.

In the forest school for 200 children—they need ten such schools—the children are taught in fresh air under good conditions. If only they had sufficient food and clothing much could be done. £1,000 would feed the whole school for a year. The tubercular dispensary has only fifteen tins of condensed milk for the worst cases. The Austrian organizations are all ready, and with the present rate of exchange English money can do so much.

Any gifts of money or clothes would be so gratefully received if sent earmarked for Wiener Neustadt—the money to Friends' Emergency and War Victims' Relief, 27, Chancery Lane, W.C. 2, the clothes to Friends' Emergency and War Victims' Clothing Depot, 5, New Street Hill.—Yours, &c.,

CONSTANCE F. GOSTICK.

Friends' Relief Mission, Jugendamt, Wiener Neustadt, Nied. Oest.

January 10th, 1921.

#### THE COLLAPSE OF ARMENIA.

SIR,—Having recently returned from Transcaucasia, I may perhaps be allowed to place before your readers the principal causes which brought about the military collapse of Armenia and the establishment of a Soviet Government in that country.

In the first place, during the occupation of Transcaucasia the British authorities removed large quantities of military stores from the great Russian arsenal, Kars, and sold or gave them to Azerbaijan and to Denikin. Later the Allies undertook to provide the Armenian Government with the necessary supplies, but nothing was forthcoming till the late summer of last year, when a shipment of arms and equipment arrived from Britain. The value of this assistance was largely nullified by the fact that the rifles sent out were of the heavy and complicated Canadian Ross pattern, which had been rejected for general service after prolonged trials. These rifles, as delivered, had no slings, and were fitted with an almost useless type of bayonet. Moreover, 27½ per cent. of the consignment was taken by Georgia in return for transport facilities.

Secondly, the regimental and staff officers available for the organization of the army were too few and too incompetent. They had nearly all been trained under the old Russian system, and, with few exceptions, exhibited the notorious defects which so largely contributed to the break-up of the Russian armies in 1917. Where the Armenian troops were ably led and experienced, as at Igdir, they fought bravely; and there is every reason to believe that if Britain and France had listened to the repeated requests of the Armenian Government for the loan of officers and N.C.O.s to assist them in the training of their forces the rest of the army would have acquitted itself equally well.

Thirdly, the economic condition of the country did not permit of the training of men in any numbers before the Turkish attack matured. The men could not be spared from the land till the crops for 1920 had been sown; and then calling-up had to be postponed till after the harvest was gathered or there would have been no means of feeding the troops. Throughout this period both economic recovery and military operations were badly hampered by transport diffi-

culties and the lack of oil fuel. During the summer, for example, there was rarely more than one train a week between Erivan and the Georgian frontier, and the journey would take anything from six to fifteen days. In September last, the British Government arranged for a consignment of mazout to be sent from Constantinople, but this arrived too late to be of any use in the war with the Nationalist Turks.

In the last place, the confidence of the troops and of the people was undermined by the Turks' propaganda announcing that they had the support of the British in their desire to pass through Armenia in order to turn the Bolsheviks out of Baku. The utter failure of the Allies to render Armenia effective assistance in her extremity lent color to the report.

These facts show that the defeat and Sovietization of Armenia cannot be laid entirely at her own door, but are to a considerable extent the results of the failure of Allied and British policy in Transcaucasia. Meanwhile, the plight of the Armenian people is desperate in the extreme. The population fled *en masse* before the Turkish advance, and such as have not already succumbed to hunger or exposure are living—or rather dying—under conditions which I cannot attempt to depict. Cannot the magnificent orations delivered at Geneva be translated into effective and disinterested assistance before the surviving remnant of the nation perishes?—Yours, &c.,

C. LEONARD LEESE  
(Organizing Secretary, British  
Armenia Committee).

January 14th, 1921.

#### "IMPASSIONED HUMANISM."

SIR,—I must thank your reviewer of my little book, "Original Sinners," for his very kindly estimate of myself and my work, especially as a journalist and "rebel." But there is one point I should like to question in his review. I have been reviewed far too often, and have reviewed far too many books myself, ever to dispute a critic's general judgment. The best rule is to leave the criticism alone and say no more about it. But this particular review raises one point of wider interest, and it is this.

Your reviewer writes: "The imaginative quality in him" (i.e., in me) "is overborne by that of the humanist—which, isolated from artistic passion, is merely that of the propagandist." In reading that sentence, I perceive how unfortunate it was for me that he had heard of me before. If he had not heard of me, I think he would not have detected propaganda in any part of the book. A critic in another literary journal treated the book with the superior scorn that one expects from votaries of preciosity; but he never hinted at propaganda, for he had never heard of me before. I think that if your critic had enjoyed the same ignorance, he would not have detected propaganda either. But having heard tell of me, he thought he would necessarily find characteristics suitable to the very complimentary conception he had formed.

He does not mention the scene of Diocletian at Spalato, but I could imagine someone finding propaganda in a parallel between the Roman Emperor's treatment of the early Christians and our Government's treatment of the Conscientious Objectors. My main thought in the story was the irony of Diocletian's retirement in that vast fortress-palace which he built for refuge against the advancing Christian superstition, as contrasted with the conversion of his very own temple and tomb into the existing churches and altars of Christ. But I admit that the execution of the Christians in the arena was just the same in principle as the persecution of the pacifists who were so mistaken as to believe that Christ's commands ought to be obeyed—a supposition upon which any bishop could have set them right. Otherwise I can discover no trace of propaganda in the book, unless "Pongo's Illusion" can be regarded as a Sunday School tract for teaching kindness to animals!

The trouble is that critics who know a writer's past work or life form a fixed idea about him, and naturally expect him to comply with their conception. All of us—not writers only—get jammed for convenience into pigeon-holes, and the pigeon, when once securely caged, is never allowed to fly. Goethe complained that, after he had written

"Werther," the critics expected him to go on writing "Werthers" till doomsday, and were angry when he went off on quite different lines. The mistake is natural, and saves a lot of trouble. But that a man has done a thing once is every reason why he should never do it again. Some Greek—perhaps it was Aristotle, the first of critics—stated a great law of life as well as of literature when he wrote, "Twice is impossible."—Yours, &c.,

HENRY W. NEVINSON.

[*Plumage Bill Appeal*: Owing to an oversight, Mrs. McKenna's (Hon. Treasurer of Plumage Bill Group) address was given in our columns as 36, Great Smith Street. It should be 36, Smith Square, to which address all money should be sent.]

### Poetry.

#### EVENING.

How beautiful the eve comes in,  
The grazing kine, the village din  
Of happy children, cocks and hens,  
And chickens chirping in their pens,  
And hogs that grunt the roots to eat,  
And dogs asleep on their forefeet,  
And sparrows on the mossy thatch  
Waiting whatever they may catch—  
Beneath the oak, the old cart shed,  
There the capon goes to bed,  
On the old crippled waggon, see,  
Propped up with an old axle tree.  
By the wall on broken rail  
Tweets red-breasted firetail,  
And there neighbor pied flycatch  
Builds cobweb nest in the old thatch,  
Where besom weed that high wind leaves  
Blossoms and blooms above the eaves.  
The old cow crib is mossed and green  
As if it just had painted been,  
The ramping kecks in orchard gaps  
Shake like green neighbors in white caps,  
On which the snail will climb and dwell  
For three weeks in its painted shell.  
There the white-nosed clock-a-clay  
Red and black-spotted sits all day,  
Round which the white-nosed bee will hum,  
To which the black-nosed bee will come  
More than a hundred times a day,  
Till evening shadows cool in grey.  
Wormwood, burdock the cart conceals,  
Rolling and wanting both the wheels,  
The battered waggon wanting three  
Stands propped with broken axle-tree—  
A hen-pen with two slats away  
And hen and chickens gone astray,  
A barrow left without a wheel  
Since spring, which nettles now conceal.  
From three stone-getting on the moor,  
The creeping donkeys pass the door.  
The geese on dunhills clean their quills  
And squabble o'er the dainty pills  
Thrown out by the housewife's cares,  
Who supper for her man prepares.  
Labor returning from its toils—  
Ditcher that the earth besoids,  
Hedgers from the wattled thorn,  
Scaring birdboy with his hcrn,  
Who blows it to the wandering moon  
And thinks the village knows the tune,  
The shepherd in the nearly dark,  
Followed by his dog's gruff bark.  
The milkmaid tripping through the dew,  
Singing all the evening through—  
The owlet through the barn-hole peeps  
And all the village hides and sleeps.

JOHN CLARE.

(An unpublished Poem from the *Asylum Series*.)



## The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

- "Travels in Arabia Deserta." By Charles M. Doughty. New and Complete Edition. 2 Vols. (Lee Warner. 9 guineas.)
- "Suvorof." By W. Lyon Blease. With an Introduction by Major-General Sir C. E. Callwell, K.C.B. (Constable. 25s.)
- "Little Pierre." By Anatole France. A Translation by J. Lewis May. (Lane. 7s. 6d.)
- "Revolution." A Novel. By J. D. Beresford. (Collins. 9s.)
- "The Green Ring." A Play in Four Acts. Translated from the Russian of Zinaida Hippus by S. S. Koteliarsky. (Daniel. 3s. 6d.)
- "The Brass Check." A Study in American Journalism. By Upton Sinclair. (Hendersons. 3s. 6d.)

"Are we, then, a civilized people? Has the Man of to-day, still living by bloodshed, still striving to grow rich at the expense of his neighbor, still using torture in punishment, still seeking sport in destruction, still waging fratricidal wars, and, while making a hell on earth, claiming for himself an eternal heaven hereafter—has this selfish, predatory being arrived at a state of civilization?"

THESE are Mr. Henry Salt's words in a recent anthropological work based on a residence of seventy years among the tribes living in the islands to the west of Europe. His book ("Seventy Years Among Savages"—Allen & Unwin) comes out at a happy moment. The "Humanitarian League," of which he was the master-spirit for twenty-four years, is dead, with but one solid victory to the credit-side of its innumerable campaigns (the abolition of the Royal Buckhounds); the general cause of humanity is at its lowest ebb; the war has undone most of the work accomplished during the last fifty years; there is no great spirit to step into Mr. Salt's shoes; no decent Bill, whether on behalf of men or animals, has the ghost of a chance against the wolfish interests that make their money out of blood and torture; while the only two living men—Mr. James Buckland and Mr. Salt himself—who might by their courage and genius have pulled through the most urgent of animal reforms, the Plumage Bill, are off the stage: the one broken-hearted at the persistent failures of a cause which owes practically everything to him; the other, grand old warrior that he is, having earned his rest.

BUT what a briskly cheerful, sly, tart, positively frolicsome Crusader he is, singing and dancing in front of his exiguous army like Taillefer the Jongleur at the Battle of Hastings! Anybody less unlike the conventional portrait of the humanitarian than the hearty, witty Mr. Salt is difficult to imagine. Partly, like not a few convinced pacifists (his chapter on the war is headed "The Cave-Man Re-emerges"), he adores scrapping; partly, like other robust-minded men of his type, Morris and Huxley, for instance, he is of a sanguine temperament, and partly the quality of his opponents was rich manure for his sense of humor. The book is so packed with jokes and jolly reminiscences that it has given some leverage to the Press to ignore his very pertinent charges against the barbarism of our society in favor of its portage of quotable anecdote. And if any fun can be squeezed out of so stony a job as this John Baptist of humanity took on his shoulders, let us make the most of it and rejoice with him over his "Ode on an Exceedingly Distant Prospect of Humane Reform at Eton College," over his Peterloo that was won on the Playing Fields of Eton, over his reply to a learned man who asked him whether animals had not been sent for our use that he had not yet received the invoice, over his "Literæ Inhumaniores," and over the face of Mr. George Moore who, when learning the nature of his work, looked like a bishop to whom the sinner had cheerfully confessed he had just committed the sin against the Holy Ghost.

FULL of gusto as are the portraits of the famous in the book, it seems to be overlooked by his critics that while such memorialists are not rare there is only one Henry Salt. There are three things to be said about "Seventy Years Among Savages" which are such truisms that it has not yet

been considered necessary for his critics to say them. The first is that in the main he happens to be right. The war was not evidence of a relapse into barbarism, but of the fact that we had never left it. We are, as Mr. Salt says, a race of rough, but not unkindly barbarians, emerging with infinite slowness to a more humanized condition, and if we pride ourselves, not unjustly, on being better men than some other South European tribes, that is not because we are more civilized than they are, but because they are more barbarous than we are. To talk of our "civilization" is sheer snobbery; it is as though the "boots" of a great house were to remark casually to his acquaintance: "My house in Cavendish Square, you know." There is, as Mr. Salt truly says, real consolation for them of goodwill in this, since it will be the bit of civilization rather than of savagery that will come as a surprise. On the other hand, I think we are further on than Mr. Salt does, not for the outward and visible signs, but simply because the evolutionary demand upon us for a more civilized conduct has become imperative. We have to respond to it or die, and the student of life's history will know that it is not lack of capacity which fails to meet these liabilities. It's sheer cussedness. Secondly, Mr. Salt is a whole-hogger by force of logic as well as feeling. This is one of the finest and most clear-headed things about him, this faithfulness in *partibus infidelium*. His League was founded upon "the general principle of humaneness"—it was not so much the object of the thing as the thing itself—humanity (let me eschew the horrid word "humanitarianism," which, I am sure, is responsible for the legend that the humanitarian wears goloshes and blue spectacles). Flogging (in schools, the Navy, and gaol) and vivisection were two planks in the League platform, and he was never running to and fro between the people who wanted the floggers vivisected and the people who wanted the vivisectors flogged. He stood four-square.

BUT there is another reason why Mr. Salt hates war and commercialism as impartially as he hates stag-hunting, the Zoo, and skinning pregnant seals alive for women's coats. For no other reason than that, after Darwin himself, he was the first of the Darwinians. I think it a pity that he did not hunt up those words of Darwin that are quite unknown, because carefully concealed by orthodox science and orthodox religion alike:—

"Sympathy beyond the confines of man, that is, humanity to the lower animals, seems to be one of the latest moral acquisitions. . . . This virtue, one of the noblest with which man is endowed, seems to arise incidentally from our sympathies becoming more tender and more widely diffuse, until they are extended to all sentient beings."

THE fact is that "humanitarianism" is science; it can be held and followed by the coldest blooded man who ever read Darwin. The only people who have a logical right to abuse "humanitarianism" are the special-creationists, and, in justice to them, they stick to their logic. But it is sentimental for the man of science to persist in the anthropocentric fallacy, and if he does, it is to meet, as Mr. Salt points out, the sacerdotalist over the animal's tomb:—

"O there above the little grave  
We kissed again with tears"

Mr. Salt repeats over and over again that the "emancipation of men" is "inseparably connected" with the "emancipation of animals." Let those, he says, "who have been horrified by the spectacle of an atrocious war" support the peace movement—but "let them also support the still wider and deeper humanitarian movement, inasmuch as all humane causes, though seemingly separate, are ultimately and essentially one." I admire Mr. Salt not so much because he preaches justice to men, animals (and mountains) alike, but because he thinks soundly and not fluffily, and acts upon his conclusions like the man of mettle that he is.

IN particulars, of course, he utters debatable things; his philosophy seems sometimes askew. Critically he sometimes loses his way. But if he were totally wrong, who could withhold homage to this brave and faithful spirit standing with a smile in the ruin of all his hopes, and saying after his favorite poet: "Till Hope creates From its own wreck the thing it contemplates."

H. J. M.

## Reviews.

## JOHN CLARE.

"John Clare: Poems." Chiefly from Manuscript. Edited by EDMUND BLUNDEN and ALAN PORTER. (Cobden-Sanderson. 10s. 6d. net.)

MR. ARTHUR SYMONS edited a good selection of the poems of John Clare a few years ago, and Edward Thomas was always faithful in his praise. Yet this new edition of Clare's work will mean for most of its readers the rediscovery of a lost man of genius. For Clare, though he enjoyed a "boom" in London almost exactly a hundred years ago, has never been fully appreciated: he has never even been fully printed. In 1820 he was more famous than Keats, who had the same publisher. Keats's 1820 volume was one of the great books of English literature, but the public preferred John Clare, and three editions of "Poems Descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery," were sold between January 16th and the last of March. It was not that the public had discovered a poet: it was merely that they had discovered an agricultural laborer who was a poet. At the same time, to have been over-boomed was bound to do Clare's reputation harm. It raised hopes that his verse did not satisfy, and readers who come to an author expecting too much are apt in their disappointment to blame him for even more faults than he possesses. It is obvious that if we are asked to appreciate Clare as a poet in the same company as Keats and Shelley, our minds will be preoccupied with the sense that he is an intruder, and we shall only be able to listen to him with all our attention when he has ceased to challenge such ruinous comparisons. We do not know whether the critics of 1820 gave more praise to Clare than to Keats. But the public did. The public blew a bubble, and the bubble burst. Had Clare, instead of making a sensation, merely made the quiet reputation he deserved, he would not have collapsed so soon into one of the most unjustly neglected poets of the nineteenth century.

In order to appreciate Clare, we have to begin by admitting that he never wrote either a great or a perfect poem. He never wrote a "Tintern Abbey" or a "Skylark" or a "Grecian Urn" or a "Tiger" or a "Red, Red Rose" or an "Ode to Evening." He was not a great artist uttering the final rhythms and the final sentences—rhythms and sentences so perfect that they seem like existences that have escaped out of eternity. His place in literature is nearer that of Gilbert White or Mr. W. H. Hudson than that of Shelley. His poetry is a mirror of things rather than a window of the imagination. It belongs to a borderland where naturalism and literature meet. He brings things seen before our eyes: the record of his senses is more important than the record of his imagination or his thoughts. He was an observer whose consuming delight was to watch—to watch a grasshopper or a snail, a thistle or a yellow-hammer. The things that a Wordsworth or a Shelley sees or hears open the door, as it were, to still more wonderful things that he has not seen or heard. Shelley hears a skylark, and it becomes not only a skylark, but a flight of images, illuminating the mysteries of life as they pass. Wordsworth hears a Highland girl singing, and her song becomes not only a girl's song, but the secret music of far times and far places, brimming over and filling the world. To Clare the skylark was most wonderful as a thing seen and noticed: it was the end, not the beginning, of wonders. He may be led by real things to a train of reflections: he is never, we think, at his best led to a train of images. His realism, however, is often steeped in the pathos of memory, and it is largely this that changes his naturalism into poetry. One of the most beautiful of his poems is called "Remembrances," and who that has read it can ever forget the moving verse in which Clare calls up the play of his boyhood and compares it with a world in which men have begun to hang dead moles on trees?

"When from school o'er Little Field with its brook and wooden  
brig,  
Where I swaggered like a man though I was not half so big,  
While I held my little plough though 'twas but a willow twig,  
And drove my team along made of nothing but a name,  
'Gee hep' and 'hoit' and 'woi'—O I never call to mind  
These pleasant names of places but I leave a sigh behind,

While I see little mouldiworps hang sweeing to the wind  
On the only aged willow that in all the field remains,  
And nature hides her face while they're sweeing in their chains  
And in a silent murmuring complains."

The pity that we find in this poem is, perhaps, the dominant emotion in Clare's work. Helpless living things made a special appeal to him, and he honored the spear-thistle, as it had never been honored in poetry before, chiefly because of the protection it gave to the nesting partridge and the lark. In "Spear Thistle," after describing the partridge, which will lie down in a thistle-clump,

"and dust  
And prune its horse-shoe circled breast,"  
he goes on:—

"The sheep when hunger presses sore  
May nip the clover round its nest;  
But soon the thistle wounding sore  
Relieves it from each brushing guest,  
That leaves a bit of wool behind,  
The yellow-hammer loves to find.

"The horse will set his foot and bite  
Close to the ground lark's guarded nest  
And snort to meet the prickly sight;  
He fans the feathers of her breast—  
Yet thistles prick so deep that he  
Turns back and leaves her dwelling free."

We have only to compare the detail of Clare's work with the sonorous generalizations in, say, Thomson's "Seasons"—which he admired—to realize the immense gulf that divides Clare from his eighteenth-century predecessors. Clare, indeed, is more like a twentieth-century than an eighteenth-century poet. He is almost more like a twentieth-century than a nineteenth-century poet. He is neo-Georgian in his preference for the fact in itself rather than the image or the phrase. The thing itself is all the image he asks, and Mr. W. H. Davies in his simplest mood might have made the same confession of faith as Clare:—

"I love the verse that mild and bland  
Breathes of green fields and open sky,  
I love the muse that in her hand  
Bears flowers of native poesy;  
Who walks nor skips the pasture brook  
In scorn, but by the drinking horse  
Leans o'er its little brig to look  
How far the fallows lean across."

There is no poet, we fancy, in whose work the phrase, "I love," recurs oftener. His poetry is largely a list of the things he loves:—

"I love at early morn, from new-mown swath,  
To see the startled frog his route pursue;  
To mark while, leaping o'er the dripping path,  
His bright sides scatter dew,  
The early lark that from its bustle flies  
To hail his matin new;  
And watch him to the skies:

"To note on hedgrow baulks, in moisture sprent,  
The jetty snail creep from the mossy thorn,  
With earnest heed and tremulous intent,  
Frail brother of the morn,  
That from the tiny bents and misted leaves  
Withdraws his timid horn,  
And fearful visions weaves."

As we read Clare we discover that it is almost always the little things that catch his eye—and his heart:—

"Grasshoppers go in many a thrumming spring,  
And now to stalks of tasselled sow-grass cling,  
That shakes and swees awhile, but still keeps straight;  
While arching ox-eye doubles with his weight.  
Next on the cat-tail grass with farther bound  
He springs, that bends until they touch the ground."

He is never weary of describing the bees. He praises the ants. Of the birds, he seems to love the small ones best. How beautifully he writes of the hedge-sparrow's little song!:

"While in a quiet mood hedge-sparrows try  
An inward stir of shadowed melody."

There is the genius of a lover in this description. Here is something finally said. Clare continually labors to make the report of his eye and ear accurate. He even begins one of his "Asylum Poems" with the line:—

"Sweet chestnuts brown like soling leather turn;"

and, in another, pursues realism in describing an April evening to the point of writing:—

"Sheep ointment seems to daub the dead-hued sky."

His countryman's attempt at an echo of the blue-tit's song makes the success of one of his good poems tremble for a moment in the balance:—

"Dreamers, mark the honey bee;  
Mark the tree  
Where the blue cap 'tootle tee'  
Sings a glee,  
Sung to Adam and to Eve—  
Here they be.  
When floods covered every bough,  
Noah's ark  
Heard that ballad singing now;  
Hark, hark,  
  
'Tootle, tootle, tootle tee'—  
Can it be  
Pride and fame must shadows be?  
Come and see—  
Every season owns her own;  
Bird and bee  
Sing creation's music on;  
Nature's glee  
Is in every mood and tone  
Eternity."

Obviously, Clare was more intensely concerned about the bird than about the eternity on which it set him thinking. He does come nearer an imaginative vision of life in this than in most of his poems. But, where Shelley would have given us an image, Clare is content to set down "Tootle, tootle, tootle tee."

Clare's poems of human life are of less account than his poems of bird and insect life; but one of the most beautiful of all his poems, "The Dying Child," introduces a human figure among the bees and flowers. The first three verses run:—

"He could not die when trees were green,  
For he loved the time too well.  
His little hands, when flowers were seen,  
Were held for the bluebell,  
As he was carried o'er the green.  
  
"His eye glanced at the white-nosed bee,  
He knew those children of the spring:  
When he was well and on the lea,  
He held one in his hands to sing,  
Which filled his heart with glee.  
  
"Infants, the children of the spring!  
How can an infant die  
When butterflies are on the wing,  
Green grass, and such a sky?  
How can they die at spring?"

The writer of these lines was a poet worth rediscovering, and Messrs. Blunden and Porter have given us a book in which we can wander at will, peering into hedges and at the traffic of the grass, as in few even of the great poets. Mr. Blunden has also written an admirable, though needlessly pugnacious account of the life of The Green Man, as Clare was called in Lamb's circle, because of his clothes. It is a story of struggle, poverty, drink, a moment's fame without money to correspond, a long family, and the madness of a man who, escaping from the asylum, ate "the grass on the roadside which seemed to taste something like bread." Knowing the events of his life, we read Clare's poetry with all the more intense curiosity. And, if we do not expect to find a Blake or a Wordsworth, we shall not be disappointed. Certainly this is a book that must go on the shelf near the works of Mr. Hudson.

#### MR. BELLOC'S KING.

"The House of Commons and Monarchy." By H. BELLOC.  
(Allen & Unwin. 7s. 6d. net.)

MR. HILAIRE BELLOC is the ablest purveyor of half-truths now studying English politics. In the present volume he is concerned to explain the degeneration of the House of Commons and to suggest a remedy therefor. His analysis is really brilliant journalism; but it is so profoundly the servant of Mr. Belloc's own prejudices that at every point he overstates his own case. Mr. Belloc, moreover, is totally without sense of the complexity of political structure, with the result that when he finds an aspect of truth he assumes it to be the whole system without regard to other possibilities. The result is so vastly to overlay his outlook

with untenable hypotheses as to destroy the effectiveness of his conclusions.

His main argument is essentially a simple one. The House of Commons, he says, was, in its classical period, the effective instrument of an aristocratic State; that aristocracy is now in decay, with the result that the House of Commons has outlived its usefulness. By an aristocracy, Mr. Belloc means "an oligarchy enjoying a peculiar respect from its fellow citizens," and he traces its origin to that period when Henry VIII. purchased the success of the Reformation by the gift of the monastic lands to his nobles. Thenceforward the King was transformed into what Coke called the noble hieroglyphic of the Crown; and the real seat of power was in the hands of six hundred odd gentlemen enjoying a special respect from their subjects. They might make mistakes. They might, like the Grenvilles, enrich themselves at the public expense. They might be corrupt like Walpole, or tyrannical like the younger Pitt. They might embark on civil war as in 1688, or steal the commons of England from their rightful proprietors. But so long as they enjoyed this "special respect" all went well with the House of Commons. It was not until the oligarchy ceased to be aristocratic that the system began to break down. Englishmen then ceased to glorify the seat of power. With the decay of respect, there came the end of utility; and Mr. Belloc insists that neither procedural reform upon the one hand, nor transformation into a vocational body upon the other, will effectively reconstitute the ancient prestige of a legislative assembly.

Now in all this there is undoubtedly a large measure of truth, though less than Mr. Belloc, with his fine instinct for sweeping simplicity, is ready to imagine. The rule of his "aristocratic" House of Commons did not begin with the Reformation. Elizabeth was the mistress of her Parliaments; neither James nor his son surrendered power into the Commons' hands. The civil wars enunciated the principle of Parliamentary sovereignty; but it was not until 1688 that the principle secured effective substance. More, it was not until the ministry of Walpole that the Commons found in the office of Prime Minister that source of a stream of continuous tendency upon which its well-being rested. From that time until about 1870, the House of Commons was a superb instrument of governance, and in that time, undoubtedly, the special prestige of the aristocracy is unquestionable.

Yet what Mr. Belloc fails to note is the presence of what he calls egalitarianism from the very outset of the period he analyzes. The dogma of equality is entirely destructive of aristocratic prestige; and for the modern world equality, as de Maistre pointed out a century ago, is essentially the eldest child of the Reformation. How deep-rooted that notion is in the English temper a score of writers make manifest. It is seen in Honest John Lubbock, in the Army debates against Ireton and Cromwell, in Priestley and Price, in Paine and Bentham, in the whole movement we call Chartism. The English people may, as Mr. Belloc insists, have hated the Marconi scandal; but they did not less eagerly hate, as the "Extraordinary Black Book" bears witness, the depredations of Grenvilles and Beresfords. No one, in fact, can read aright the history of the House of Commons who does not see in it an assembly the very foundation of whose power and influence was its ability, until the last generation, to draw its ideas from an increasingly wider area of public opinion. The lowest moment of the House is, if not in 1921, in 1770 under the narrow basis upon which Lord North depended; the zenith of its influence is between 1832 and 1870, when it is mainly occupied in giving way to the people. That, in fact, is to say that the House was at the height of its excellence exactly when, on Mr. Belloc's hypothesis, the foundation of its efficacy had given way.

The real seat of the modern disturbance, indeed, lies in a direction in which Mr. Belloc hardly glances at all. The nineteenth century is mainly occupied in the conquest of political equality. The right to the franchise, the right to combine, the right to education, the right to a full religious freedom—it was upon the attainment of these that the minds of men were concentrated, the prestige of the House of Commons in large part derives from the fact that it was the agency through which they were secured. To-day the demand



has drifted to the economic sphere; and for the first time in its history the House of Commons is squarely confronted by a demand that the concept of property be fundamentally changed. What has so far emerged with clearness in the struggle is the fact that the demand for economic equality is in substance different from the demand for political equality; and the doubt accordingly arises whether the House is fitted for that effort. It has not, indeed, had a full opportunity; for Sir Edward Carson and Mr. Lloyd George have between them deliberately spiked its guns and neglected its possibilities.

And it is Mr. Lloyd George's career, particularly, which exposes the falsity of the remedy Mr. Belloc has to offer. The House having failed, he suggests in its place the personal rule of a single man. He may have councils to support him; he may be elected for four years, or seven, or for life, but essentially full responsibility is to be centred in his person. It is difficult to avoid the conviction that Mr. Belloc's scheme is really the introduction of his personal Charles's head, the Pope of Rome. The objections to such a system are too manifold for enumeration. We do not want a Louis Napoleon, a Bismarck, even a President Wilson. If liberty is the end of a political system, and if liberty means the capacity for continuous initiative on the part of every citizen, Mr. Belloc certainly reduces liberty to a minimum. If an aristocracy breaks down, the complex of passions and interests which would surround an active monarch would be immediately fatal to his security; and Mr. Belloc would inflict upon the members of the State that cruellest of all tortures, the possession of many thoughts without power to translate them into action. Granted that direct democracy is impossible in the large scale modern State, its antithesis is even more unthinkable; for a monarch, unlike the Pope, has not a guarantee of infallibility.

We are driven back, in short, to experiment with what Mr. Belloc so casually dismisses—a legislative assembly at least partially built upon the present House of Commons. And after all, there is little reason as yet to despair of the future of representative government. The battle for political equality lasted nearly a century; and that at a time when the resources of the people were far less organized than now. Our main task is not the abandonment of the instruments at our disposal, but the effort to use their full opportunity. To that end the first stage is the destruction of Mr. Lloyd George; for the system of which he is sponsor is a long step on the road to the end Mr. Belloc desires.

#### EARLY CHRISTIAN THOUGHT.

"Landmarks in the History of Early Christianity." By KIRSOPP LAKE, D.D. (Macmillan. 8s. 6d. net.)

THESE lectures are a restatement of some of the conclusions reached in the important "Prolegomena to the Acts of the Apostles" recently published by the author in conjunction with Dr. Foakes-Jackson. In the present volume these conclusions appear "in a less technical form, and with more attention to their bearing on some of the larger questions of religion and thought, such as the Teaching of Jesus, the Hope of Immortality, and the Development of Christology"; they will, therefore, appeal to a larger circle of readers than that which is likely to interest itself in the former work. The detachment of the writer's standpoint is as complete as his knowledge of his subject-matter is exceptional; it would be impossible to name any English book which throws as much or as dry a light upon what is the most important period of the history of Christianity—the 150 years which lie between the Apostles and the Epigoni, the little company of believers and the Catholic Church. The study of Christian origins is conclusive both as to the extent of the transformation effected during this period and as to the early date at which it began. From the opening of the mission to the Gentiles "the history of Christianity might be written as a series of syntheses with the thought and practice of the Roman world, beginning with the circumference and moving to the centre." An account of them would be a Universal Church History: these lectures "are limited to the discussion of the evolution of the first and the beginning of the second—that is to say, the change of Christianity from a Jewish sect to

a sacramental cult, and the beginning of the movement which introduced Greek metaphysics into its theology."

The most important problem presented by this change is the Christological one. The line of thought suggested in these lectures, and forced upon us by the critical examination of the sources from which a scientific as opposed to a merely antiquarian theology proceeds, may seem to reduce "the amount of Christology traceable to Jesus Himself to a vanishing point."

"No doubt it is a departure from orthodoxy. But, if the history of religion has any clear lesson, it is that a nearer approach to truth is always a departure from orthodoxy. Moreover, the alternative to the view stated is to hold that Jesus did regard Himself as either one or both of the Jewish figures, the Davidic Messiah, and the Son of Man described in Enoch. Both of these are part of a general view of the universe, and especially of a prognostication of the future, wholly different from our own, and quite incredible to modern minds. How do we endanger the future of Christianity by doubting that Jesus identified Himself with figures centred in incredible and now almost universally abandoned forms of thought?"

The *obiter dictum* of Acts xi. 26, to the effect that "the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch," suggests very much more than it states. It was at Antioch that, when a new appellation was required for the titles "Messiah" and "Son of Man," both of which were unintelligible to Gentile hearers, Jesus was first called "Lord." This term may have been used occasionally in Aramaic-speaking circles, but "it became dominant in Greek, and its extreme importance is that it was already familiar to the Greek-speaking world in connection with religion." Its effect was that Christ "became the divine centre of a cult," and that Christianity developed on the lines of a Græco-Oriental mystery religion offering salvation to its initiates—as did the religions of Isis and Mithras. To the question, what exactly was meant by salvation, no one answer can be given: the notion underlying the term varies according as this is regarded from the standpoint of Græco-Jewish eschatology, or from that of Græco-Oriental sacramentalism. Judged by our standards the former is mythological, and the latter magical. Neither was known to Jesus; and the writer remarks acutely that "the element of truth in much perverse criticism, arguing that Jesus never existed, is that the Jesus of history is quite different from the Lord assumed as the founder of Catholic Christianity." The modern man, who rejects both, is nearer the sources than he knows.

"He does believe that so long as life lasts, and he does not know any limit to its duration, good and evil are realities, and those who do good, and are good, achieve life of increasingly higher and higher potentiality. If anything were gained in practical life by calling this 'salvation,' it would be right and wise to do so. But in fact it is disastrous, for it obscures thought and confuses language."

#### THE LAST AND WORST PLOT.

"The Cause of World Unrest." With an Introduction by the EDITOR OF THE "MORNING POST." (Grant Richards. 10s. 6d. net.)

IT is hard to credit that grown-up people can be responsible for this work. We should suspect it to be a parody of the "Morning Post" in a delirious, marabout, movement, if the unembarrassed Mr. Gwynne had not put his name to the introduction. "The people throughout the ages have presented a pathetic spectacle," the editor rightly laments; and equally sad are those giddy guessings into history and political science. Lacking the ability to examine, and the patience and caution necessary to discover facts and make deductions, the writers of this book leap into dark guesses. It is easier than investigation. When they hear that a miner has discovered that if food prices rise he must have a higher wage or cut his family's rations, they say, mysteriously: "It's these Jews putting him up to that. It's a plot." When honest men denounce a social wrong they remark: "It's a Hebrew conspiracy to destroy our Empire." The French Revolution was a Jewish plot (manufactured in Germany, we gather, though of this we are not certain, it being so difficult to find the point in this rigmarole of Freemasonry, Judaism, "symbolism of the snake," and other odd things). "To Hell with the Pope" is dropped as a

clinching argument against Home Rule, for the cunning Jew is behind Sinn Fein. "The main outline of the contents of this book," says Mr. Gwynne, "is that there has been for centuries a hidden conspiracy, chiefly Jewish, whose objects have been and are to produce revolution, communism, and anarchy, by means of which they hope to arrive at the hegemony of the world by establishing some sort of despotic rule." That is the main outline, and the evidence for it is not a bit less likely. Here is some of it:—

"Is it a mere accident that at the moment I write the whole force of Bolshevism in this country is being organized to force our Government to allow Russia to occupy Warsaw?"

"From the day of the Armistice to to-day not a single week has passed without a strike. Industry is thoroughly unsettled, and the future is dark indeed. The aim of these wreckers is to produce by the next winter such general unemployment as to ensure a discontented population on which to work. It is a diabolical plan, but, from their point of view, it is by no means a difficult one to achieve. The exploitation of the people [by "Jew-Bolsheviks" Mr. Gwynne means] has been brought to a fine art."

"Mr. Smillie and his miners' executive have increased the price of everything into which coal enters as a part of its manufacture, so that our prices are enhanced, and foreign merchants will be driven to cheaper markets at our expense."

"For a long period of time a conspiracy has been gradually developing for the overthrow of the existing Christian form of civilization . . . the prime agents of that conspiracy were Jews and revolutionaries, Freemasons . . . its object, which it is claimed is now near fruition, is to pave the way for the world supremacy of a chosen people. We do not profess to be able to substantiate these inferences; all we can do is to draw attention to some of the great forces which in recent years have been moulding government and opinion, and to see if they bear any resemblance in themselves, and in their effects to the dreams and schemes fashioned by these eager and determined fanatics."

"To describe the unofficial activities of the Jews in Paris would be to describe the work of the [Peace] Conference. Mr. Wilson was surrounded by them; even M. Clemenceau had his watch-dogs; and as for the British Delegation, one has only to mention the names of Lord Reading and Mr. Montagu and the close interest they took in the deliberations."

No one will argue over this comical but pitiful case, any more than the authors will be expected to "substantiate their inferences." Yet, after all, the preoccupation of the unlucky with their hallucinations is too painful to be a theme for comedy.

#### IMAGINATIVE FICTION.

"**The Lost Girl.**" By D. H. LAURENCE. (Seeker. 7s. 6d. net.)

"**Dead Man's Plack.**" By W. H. HUDSON. (Dent. 6s. net.)

It is instructive to compare Mr. Laurence's book with Mr. Hudson's, partly because the total contrast of their methods throws each of them into strong relief, and partly because the juxtaposition helps us to take a juster measure of the value of contemporary fiction, whose bulk and restless insistence upon us defeat our efforts to hold and scrutinize it at arm's length. Let it be said straight away that "*The Lost Girl*" is a far, far better thing than "*The Rainbow*," which was dull enough to be understood by our literary censors. It has, we think, been both undervalued and overvalued by some reviewers. The first part of the book is a realistic picture of an industrial Midland town, with the Houghtons, romantic father in the drapery business, faded wife, and discontented daughter, Alvina, for the central figures. The entry of the Neapolitan Cicio, who makes Alvina his mistress, and finally marries her and takes her off to his Southern home, is, of course, intended as a dramatic contrast. But Mr. Laurence has been misinterpreted here. It is a mistake, in the first place, to regard his picture of Woodhouse as satiric; it is a realistic study in the Bennett manner, and the author, hawk-like and incisive as he can be, does not shape particularly well as a realist. It is not his job, though he can out-realize the average realist on his head. For realism, as Mr. Bennett handles it, one needs breadth, ease, command, but above all a highly developed sense of proportion, and this Mr. Laurence lacks. He does not scan his subject as a landscape, but plunges down upon it from

above with sudden and electrical swoops, sometimes getting right to the bottom of it in a lightning stroke, at others simply missing it and exhausting himself in nervous discharges which fail of their effect. In the second place, Cicio is not in the faintest degree a romantic figure, nor does Mr. Laurence in the least intend him to be read as one, as "the breath of the warm South" stealing upon our drab English ways. The latter is simply a critical convention, worn pretty thin by constant use, and derived from the contempt of native talent and native genius, which has been a literary fad during the last few years. Cicio is simply peasant Italy or South Italy with all its cruelty, sornbreness, Catholic paganism, and material desires. Mr. Laurence really does know his Italy, and when Cicio takes Alvina back to his Southern mountains, he becomes almost a symbolic figure, set among remote and alien heights, surrounded by "a tension of money and money-grubbing and vindictive mountain morality and rather horrible religion." All this portion of the book is extremely impressive, and Mr. Laurence's clairvoyant apprehension of centuries of dark barbarism pressing upon the lost soul of Alvina with Cicio himself feeling "a fairness, a luminousness in the Northern soul, something free, touched with divinity such as these people here lacked entirely"—is wonderfully well done. It is free of that feverishness, lack of balance, and sexual pre-occupations which have made most of his previous work more than "a little damaged." Almost equally good is the portrait of the Watcha-Kee-Tawara troupe—Madame and her four young Germans, French, Swiss, and Italians—which introduces the rather terrifying Cicio, with his magnetism gained less from himself than his lowering background, to Woodhouse. And the way that Alvina is drawn powerlessly, will-lessly, and inevitably into the troupe and, finally, into Cicio's arms is indicated with rare strength of suggestion. Mr. Laurence is not an artist of the spirit, and his frequently ungainly style, unformed, staccato, wavering, full of quickly vanishing, blinding, and occasionally baleful lights, hardly persuades or entices the reader within range of his vivid influence. But he is none the less a writer of singular force, if it is sometimes dispersed, repellent, and egoistic.

To leave Mr. Laurence for Mr. Hudson is a shorthand illustration of the wide, wide differences between men's ways of looking at the world. The book is composed of two long-short stories, "*Dead Man's Plack*" being a good deal lengthier than "*An Old Thorn*," the story of an ancient and solitary tree on the Wiltshire Downs with mysterious powers, to which poor Johnny Budd, in 1821, prayed when he was being carted off to Salisbury Gaol to be hanged for stealing a sheep. This story of tree-worship is as strange and magical as the tree itself, but it is to "*Dead Man's Plack*"—an exceptionally good and striking piece of work to a masterpiece. What a wonderful experience for the reviewer is the encountering of a masterpiece, a little crock of gold buried in a dustbin parcel of rubbishy minor verse, like finding some rare and delicate flower in a backyard or bird among sparrows or book on a barrow! For in its own luminously perfect and individual way, this story of King Edgar and Elfrida, for whom he killed Athelwold his friend who deceived him and took her for himself, is a triumphantly realized work of art. Elfrida, Mr. Hudson tells us, "albeit still in purgatory" expiating the sins of her pride and ambition, and her part responsibility for the death of her stepson, was yet able to revisit the glade in Harewood Forest, Hampshire, where the monument to Athelwold stands, and "it does not seem to me altogether improbable that she herself made the revelation I have written." Her character is, as Mr. Hudson himself says, "veiled" in the narrative, and "even after ten centuries it may well be that all the coverings have not yet been removed, although she has been dropping them one by one for ages." Not yet is she able to reveal her inmost soul, for when that day comes her sufferings are over. But the calm, the transparently lovely art of Mr. Hudson should yet plead for her with an eloquence irresistible. At least, none can doubt that it all happened just as Mr. Hudson relates it, just as though his readers were not only living and present through all the phases of this Saxon tragedy, but had the mysterious power, through him, of reading the hearts of the actors.

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## The Week in the City.

(BY OUR CITY EDITOR.)

THURSDAY.

THE rise in the New York exchange, which is now quoted about \$3.76, is one of the bright features of the week, while on the Stock Exchange the gilt-edged market retains its strength. Industrials generally are depressed, and the recovery in rubber shares has been checked. But holders of shares in good plantation companies must be glad that they did not give way to the panic advice which I took recent occasion to deprecate. As a general rule, such holders should still "wait and see."

The feature of the week's National Accounts since the beginning of the New Year has been the heavy sales of Treasury Bills and the resultant change in the composition of the floating debt. In the two weeks ending January 15th Treasury Bill sales exceeded maturities by no less than £51½ millions, and Ways and Means Advances by the Bank of England were repaid to a similar amount, while excess of revenue over expenditure has allowed the additional repayment of £8½ millions of advances from Government Departments, the total floating debt being reduced in the fortnight by the latter figure. An encouraging feature of the accounts is the improvement in sales of National Savings Certificates at £1,100,000, although £400,000 was absorbed by encashments. A new issue of 3 per cent. Local Loans is being made on precisely the same terms as the issue of a few months ago.

Only a few of the great Bank balance-sheets are available up to the time of writing, so that I must defer consideration of the deductions to be drawn from the figures of loans and deposits. From the accounts so far published it does not appear that the restriction of credit, so loudly complained of by the commercial community, has in actual fact taken place.

### THE INVESTMENT OUTLOOK.

The feature of the stock markets since this year began has been the improved tone of gilt-edged securities. With the industrial outlook exceedingly complex the small investor should more than ever concentrate his attention upon the highest class of security. Industrial and speculative issues are certainly depressed in a host of cases to prices which in the ordinary way would appear highly attractive, and in normal times there is a mint of wisdom in the advice "buy in a falling market." But times are not normal, and few experts would care to prophesy the trend of dividends on ordinary stocks of industrial companies during the next year or two. The present trade depression may give way to prosperous times, but those who are attracted by industrial shares at present prices would, in comparatively few cases, be justified in banking upon a maintenance of last year's dividend rates. The process of inflation brought about swollen profits, high dividends, and bonuses. Deflation has now to be faced, and its results cannot but be the reverse of those of inflation. Apart from this, there are special causes of the depression which is likely in the next few months to add largely to the list of companies whose directors deem it wise to postpone dividend payments. Now the small investor is usually a man or woman who cannot afford to risk even temporary loss of income for the chance of finding some time in the future that he or she has bought at a low price shares which are soaring on a wave of regained prosperity. Such risks and the pursuit of such prizes are for the investor with an income margin and surplus resources. On the other hand, there are reasons for regarding the highest class of investment securities with peculiar favor to-day. It is a common opinion that economic developments are tending somewhat rapidly towards cheaper money, and that interest rates are now at their peak. A reduction in the Bank rate before long is probable in the absence of unforeseen contingencies, and this would favorably affect the quotations of British Government stocks and all high class, well-secured stocks bearing interest at fixed rates. It is easy to-day to lay out money to yield 6½ per cent. or more with the best possible security. Will this be possible a year hence? Small investors should take advantage of the high yields on high-class stocks ruling to-day, and of the chance, which appears

bright, of capital appreciation in their holdings. Though prophecy is dangerous in these difficult times, it certainly looks as if the holder of gilt-edged and all good-class, fixed-interest-bearing securities are coming to a period which will afford them some compensation for the weary process of ceaseless depreciation which has so continuously tried their patience of late years. And even if capital appreciation and cheaper money tarry longer than is expected, the small investor should not, at any rate, regret purchases at present prices of many securities in the gilt-edged and well secured debenture markets. I have indicated from time to time a number of the most attractive of such stocks. Some readers may perhaps complain that I have preached this "safety first" investment policy *ad nauseam*. But instances of small investors who have come to grief through neglecting that policy come so frequently to one's notice that continual iteration seems necessary. Some instances of how gilt-edged stocks have risen recently are given below:—

		Low- est Price 1920.	Price Jan. 19, 1921.	Rise.	Pre- sent Yield.
	Redeemable.				£ s. d.
2½% Consols	At Govt. option	43½	47½	3½	8 5 3
3½% War Loan	1925—Mar. 1, 1928	79½	85½	6	6 4 0
4½% War Loan	1925—Dec. 1, 1945	76	77½	1½	6 7 0
5% War Loan	1929—June 1, 1947	81½	84½	3	6 3 6
4% War Loan	1929—Oct. 15, 1942	91½	94	2½	4 8 9†
4% Funding Loan	1960—1990	65½	69½	4	5 18 0
4% Victory Bonds	By annual dwge.	70½	75½	5	5 6 0†
5% National War Bonds	At 102, Oct. 1, 1922	95½	98½	2½	7 2 6
3½% Local Loans	At Govt. option	49½	50½	1	5 18 9
3½% New South Wales Inscribed	Oct. 1, 1924	82½	87	4½	9 10 9
Midland Railway 2½% Deb. Stk.	—	40½	41½	1	5 19 9

† Free of Income Tax.

‡ No allowance is made in this yield for profit on redemption.

The yields in the above table include the profit on redemption taken at the latest date of maturity where redemption can take place at any time over a period of years. The 3 per cent. Local Loans would undoubtedly have had a bigger rise, but they were depressed by the present offer of £15,000,000 at 50. Generally speaking, the lowest prices of 1920 were touched in the closing weeks of the year. There are those who think that the probable advent of cheaper money has already been discounted by the gilt-edged market. Such expectations have certainly contributed to the influences which have raised quotations. But this is only a further argument against delay by the small investor in getting into good securities.

### BRITISH DEBT TO AMERICA.

The official visit of Lord Chalmers to the United States as representative of the British Treasury to discuss with the American Treasury arrangements for funding British War Debt to America has been postponed for the present owing to the sudden return to London of Sir Auckland Geddes, our Ambassador at Washington. The postponement, however, is not likely to be long. Incidentally, Sir Auckland's return is likely to be seized upon as an opportunity for preliminary discussion in Whitehall of the financial questions involved. According to a recent White Paper, advances to the United Kingdom by the Government of the United States amount to nearly \$4,213 millions, or, at the par of exchange, about £865 millions sterling. All these advances were made in the period after America's official entry into the war, and in the same period that they were received the United Kingdom advanced almost exactly the same amount of money to European Allies. The burden of interest payment and redemption of these advances are a definite obligation upon the Treasury of this country. There should be little difficulty about arranging a practical funding scheme which will enable repayment to be spread over a suitable number of years. But cannot the forthcoming discussions in Washington be extended to cover the whole question of Europe's debt to America and of inter-Allied indebtedness? For this is one of the dominating problems of European finance at the moment.

L. J. R.

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